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THE FUNCTION OF SACRED BOOKS IN EARLY CHRISTIANITY AND THE GRAECO-ROMAN RELIGIONS

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PART ONE: THE JEWISH FACTOR

CHAPTER I

THE INFLUENCE OF THE OLD TESTAMENT

Introduction: The point of view of this study and the definition of the term sacred book.

Recognition of the fact that the literary deposit of early Christianity was vastly less than the great movement of life which laid it down has caused the interest of students of the New Testament to shift from a one-sided emphasis upon the study of its literary problems to a thoroughgoing attempt to know that life itself. Applied to the history of the Canon of the New Testament, this means that the tabulation of the evidence for the existence of a Canon is only one means to the discovery of the real forces which produced it. These forces were the interests which were vital to human beings who were struggling for a more satisfying life, and the key to the history of sacred books must therefore be sought in their functional value.

Whenever a book is so exalted by divine or religious sanction that it receives especial reverence or veneration it is said to be sacred. The necessary sanction is the result of its capacity to meet human needs.

Peoples among whom writing was a newly acquired art easily attributed magical significance to the written word. Possession of a book would not only enable one to accomplish what would otherwise have been impossible in this life, but in the world to come it would guide the soul safely through unknown terrors to life and fellowship with the Gods. To know the future even in this life was often of crucial importance, and

consequently books of prophecy were highly esteemed. Again, books became sacred by virtue of their use in ritual and in the organization of religious cults. Whenever, as among the Jews, worship and public instruction were closely associated, there was a double tendency to veneration, inasmuch as the aim was to induce people to do God's will, and when they did so, the satisfactions which came to them reacted in favor of the books which had promised the blessings. On the other hand, the curses pronounced in them upon the disobedient were only too often vindicated by history, thus heightening the reverence in which they were held. Even where, as among the Greeks, ethical training was based upon philosophy, an appeal was made to such authorities of the past as Homer. Indeed, philosophy itself, having become weary of its own uncertainties, took refuge in revelation.

The common element in all these uses of sacred books is the effort to justify, guarantee, or vindicate the success of some new departure in thought or action made necessary by the onward urge of life: one is much more comfortable when he can feel that a thing has been said or thought or done before. The early Christians were no exception. Their innovations in belief and practice made an authority to justify them especially necessary, and they found it in the Old Testament. As the angle of departure from Judaism widened, and as each new generation was driven to further innovations, the example of its heroes who had made previous successful ventures of faith steadied them and gave them assurance of victory. They took possession of it for themselves and made its antiquity a claim to social recognition in a world that was hostile to them. Its prophecies were proof of the final authority of Jesus the Messiah.

I. The function of sacred books as reflected in and suggested by the Old Testament.

(a) The magical significance of the written word. Since the first Christians were Jews, and since by the time of Justin Martyr they had wrested the Old Testament Scriptures from their orthodox countrymen, it is necessary to begin by ascertaining what values they saw in these books. What were the uses which the Old Testament writings themselves suggested? First to be considered is the sphere of magic. The basis of the magical function of books is the belief that the name of a thing is identical with the thing itself, so that the utterance of it as a word or formula can call it into being and bring its powers into operation. A curse may be written against either an individual or a group, as, for example, in determining the guilt or innocence of a wife accused of unfaithfulness: the priest wrote the curses in a book and blotted them into the water of bitterness which the accused was compelled to drink; if she was guilty it was expected that her body would swell and her thigh would fall away[1].

(b) Prophecies of doom and comfort. Gradually the magical element was overshadowed by the higher conception of God; yet curses upon the enemies of Israel written in the name of Jahweh were common. To a people constantly harrassed and laid waste by the marauder and invader, the Old Testament offered compensation for the humiliation of temporary defeat by recording future curses upon the oppressor. Thus Moses was commanded to write the exterminating curse against Amalek in a book[2], and rehearse it in the ears of Joshua. Isaiah after describing God's indignation against the nations said, "Seek ye out the book of Jahweh and read"[3]. Jeremiah wrote down all the evil that was to come upon Babylon and directed one of Zedekiah's officials upon his arrival in the city to read its doom from the book, which was then to be thrown into the Euphrates with the words,

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1. Lev. 5:23-28 2. Ex. 17:14-16 3. Is. 34:16

"Thus shall Babylon sink, and shall not rise again because of the evil that I will bring upon her"[1]. To the first Christian readers Amalek and Babylon were no more: God's word had been fulfilled, and it was therefore easier for them to entertain a similar assurance against Rome, the new Babylon.

Not only did the Old Testament aim the terrible power of the written curse against the foreign oppressor; it also struck at domestic injustice, immorality and idolatry. The rehearsal of the blessings and curses at Ebal and Gerezim is described as having taken place after Joshua had engraved a copy of the law of Moses upon the stones of the altar upon which he had sacrificed[2]. Of course, the ancient reader did not suspect that they might be prophecies after the event, that is, vindications of the theory that righteousness brings prosperity--a theory which often caused the facts of present experience to be pushed back into the past and described in the future tense. In fact, the early Christian reader by carrying his own experience into the biblical past could and did accomplish precisely the same result by way of allegory.

Prophecies of doom are essentially negative. On the positive side there were messages of hope and comfort. To Joshua was promised prosperity on condition of obedience[3]. The Chronicler after telling how Jehosaphat had sent five princes, ten Levites and two priests through all the cities of Judah with the book of the law, observed that a terror from Jahweh fell upon all the surrounding kingdoms so that they made no war against the king, but brought tribute[4]. A mysterious hand wrote the doom of king Belshazzar on his palace wall[5], and Daniel "understood by the books the number of the years whereof the word of Jahweh came to Jeremiah the prophet, for the accomplishing of the desolations of Jerusalem, even seventy years"[6].

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1. Jer. 51:59-64
2. Josh. 9:30-35
3. Josh. 1:8
4. 2 Chron. 17:7-12
5. Dan. 5:5
6. Dan. 9:2

The device of a book of prophetic utterances, temporarily sealed, assisted the writer of this book to gain recognition for his work[1]. The Servant Songs of Isaiah and the Messianic hope in all its variant forms, which had been the product and the sustenance of Israel's spirit, became the proof and the authority of the writers of the New Testament for claiming Jesus as the Messiah.

(c) The Book of Life. Nor was the personal hope wanting. The words of the Psalmist, "Then said I, Lo I am come; in the roll of the book it is written of me: I delight to do thy will, O my God"[2], show how the individual as well as the nation could think of his destiny as written in a book. God kept his book of life in which children yet unborn were recorded[3], and when he wrote up the peoples it was believed that he noted especially those who were born in Zion[4]. These heavenly books had their earthly counterpart in the list of the earthly city, and those who were enrolled were called to be holy[5]. A book of remembrance was written for those who feared Jahweh[6], and all whose names were written in the book of life were to be delivered in the day of judgment[7].

On the other hand, disobedience would blot a man's name out of the book of life. Those who departed from Jahweh would have their names written in the earth[8]. "The sin of Judah", declared Jeremiah, "is written with a pen of iron and with the point of a diamond: it is graven upon the tablet of their heart and upon the horns of your altars[9]". Not even the self-sacrificing willingness of Moses to suffer the consequences of Israel's sin could prevent the blotting of the sinner's name from Jahweh's book[10].

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1. Dan. 12:4
2. Ps. 40:7-8a
3. Ps. 139:16
4. Ps. 87:6
5. Is. 4:3
6. Mal. 3:16
7. Dan. 12:1
8. Jer. 17:13
9. Jer. 17:1
10. Ex. 32:32-33

(d) Sacred books in the organization of the cultus and the theocracy. Jahweh not only had books for use in heaven. With his own finger he was said to have written the Ten Commandments[1]. To be sure, this conception was the mark of supreme veneration; but only less sacred were the writings of Moses and the Prophets. Extension of reverence to them was easy because of their use in the organization and conduct of worship. The validation and driving force of Josiah's reform was an ancient book found in the temple, the awe of the people who heard it read being an important factor in securing favorable public sentiment. Ezekiel's minute plans for his ideal temple and cultus were to be written in the sight of all the people in order that they might keep all its forms and ordinances[2]. Ezra and Nehemiah likewise prepared the people for their drastic reforms by public reading of the law. Lots were cast for the priests as it was written in the law[3]; the divisions of the priests and the courses of the Levites were set in accordance therewith[4], and it gave directions for the building of altars, the offering of sacrifices, and the observance of feasts[5]. Reading the book of the law was intimately associated with confession[6], and with the intensification of the spirit of nationalism which caused the abandonment of foreign wives[7] and the exclusion of foreigners from the assembly[8].

From the days of Ezra Israel became more and more the people of a book. Ezra succeeded because he was the exponent of the needs of his time. The Jewish nation stood in great need of a written word of God. Prophecy was becoming weaker and its utterances more rare. Moreover it was felt that an important era had closed, and that for the new day the treasures

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1. Ex. 32:15-16
2. Ezek. 43:11
3. Neh. 10:34.36
4. Ez. 6:18
5. Ez. 3:1-6
6. Neh. 9:1-3
7. Ez. 10
8. Neh. 13:1-3

of the past ought to be gathered[1]. No longer must it be said that Jahweh had written for Ephraim the ten thousand things of his law, but that they were counted as a strange thing[2]; and so the message of hope was written for the generation to come, a people who would praise Jahweh[3]. Prophets asleep, seers with heads covered, visions a sealed book to the learned and the unlearned alike--all this would be so changed that the deaf could hear the words of a book and the blind see out of obscurity and darkness[4]. Israel's possession of the law would entitle her to recognition among the nations of the world and compensate for her loss of political freedom. Herein lies one reason for the tenacity with which the Jews held to their written law.

(e) The theocratic government and the sacred books. The theocratic form of government, realized it is true only in part, but always held as an ideal, also contributed to the development and use of sacred books. Samuel was said to have written the body of custom which was to govern the new kingdom in the book and to have laid it up before Jahweh. Thereafter, in the minds of the writers and editors of the Old Testament, the test of a good king was the measure of obedience he rendered to the law. Joash did not put the children of his father's murderers to death because it was forbidden in the law of Moses[5]. To be sure, a certain amount of latitude had to be allowed when it was impossible to carry out perfectly the written ideal: the Chronicler, for example, was only demonstrating his practical realism by his measures for the observance of the Passover[6]. On the other hand, Josiah's reform is represented to have been a thorough-going application of the written law. His son Jehoiakim, however, was not so

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1. Cf. G. Wildeboer, Die Entstehung des Alttestamentlichen Kanons, Gotha 1891.
2. Hos. 8:12
3. Ps. 102:18
4. Is. 29:9-12.18
5. 2 Kgs. 14:6
6. 2 Chron. 30:18-22

compliant with the written warning given by Jeremiah in the name of his God. Some of his officials had been thoroughly alarmed by it, but he himself, slitting the roll with a knife as fast as Jehudi read it, threw it into the fire. The prophet's significant and ominous comment was, "And they were not afraid, nor rent their garments, neither the king, nor any of his servants that heard all these words"[1]; and he proceeded at once to rewrite what had been burned and to add "besides unto them many like words"[2].

(f) The law as a textbook in education. Closely associated with religious observances was the matter of public instruction. At the feast of Tabernacles the law was to be read every seven years[3]. A copy of it was to be kept by the side of the ark of the Covenant for a witness against a rebellious people[4]. To the very doorpost was affixed the mezuzah inscribed with Deut. 6:4-9 and 11:13-21, so that it might never be forgotten and that the child might be taught the law of Jahweh from its infancy. The underlying theory that faithful observance of the commandments would bring prosperity, but that disobedience meant ruin made imperative an adequate provision for teaching the law. Its warnings and promises must never be out of sight, and it must be independent of the exigencies of oral transmission; hence the motive of Is. 30:8-10: "Now go, write it before them on a tablet and inscribe it in a book, that it may be for the time to come for ever and ever. For it is a rebellious people, lying children, children that will not hear the law of Jahweh; that say to the seers, See not, and to the prophets, Prophesy unto us smooth things". Oral prophecy was in danger of conforming to expediency, but the written word would be independent of the fluctuation of moral ideals.

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1. Jer. 36:24
2. Jer. 36:32
3. Deut. 31:10
4. Deut. 31:24-29

II. The resulting urge toward canonization.

(a) Brief outline of the steps in the canonization of the Old Testament. Such were the uses of the written word which the Old Testament itself suggested. The attitudes shown by the examples just given operated to make the books which came to comprise it sacred, and then to canonize them. Since these attitudes were at work for a long period of time, it is necessary to emphasize the fact that by far the greater part of the work of canonization had been done before the time of its formal or official ratification; in fact, without the veneration for them built up in the course of the centuries of their usefulness it could not have happened.

The first significant step in the more formal and conscious part of the process was taken amid the gathering shadows of national calamity. It was the solemn institution of Deuteronomy in the reign of Josiah. The beginnings of the process, however, must be traced much farther back. They were inherent in the oriental conception of law, which forbade alteration, deletion or changes in the wording of what was divinely sanctioned. Thus Hammurabi at the close of his code enjoined obedience upon the kings who should rule after him "forever and ever". "The law of the land, which I have given, the decisions which I have pronounced, he shall not alter, nor efface my image. If that man have wisdom, if he wish to keep his land in order, he shall take heed to the words which I have written upon my monument"[1]. The normative function of the divine law was recognized by Amos and Hosea[2]. In view of the evidence that in ancient Egypt it was customary to build into the temple its "Rule"[3], and of the statements of the Old Testament itself

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1. R. W. Rogers, A History of Babylonia and Assyria, N. Y. 1915, Vol. II, p. 77-78. Cf. Deut. 4:2 and 12:32.

2. Hos. 8:12; Am. 2:4.

3. Johs. Herrmann, Ägyptische Analogien zum Funde des Deuteronomiums, ZAW, Vol. 28, 1908, p. 299ff.

regarding the laying up of laws in holy places[1], there is a possibility that the book found by Hilkiah had grown out of the Hezekian reformation[2]. The very fact that the book should have been placed in the temple indicates the authority which its provisions had already attained.

In the period following Josiah the religious leaders of Judah found themselves in need of teaching and preaching material which would command the reverence and the obedience of the nation in whom they were attempting to realize the prophetic ideal of a holy people. Their conception of history was homiletical[3], and under such usage both the Yahwist and Elohist historical sources came to be sacred and normative[4]. The great Deuteronomic historical work which extends from Gen. 2 to 2 Kings 25 soon took its place of authority by the side of Deuteronomy, to be followed later by the books from Joshua to Kings. The norm, however, was not hard and fast, for the more vital a book was, the more it was likely to be worked over in the centuries of political anarchy and calamity which followed Josiah. The oral priestly Torah was reduced to writing, and post-exilic history writing was continued with Chronicles and Ezra-Nehemiah. Meanwhile the literary heritage of Ezekiel and his predecessors was meeting the needs of an age which hoped for a glorious restoration. After him hope and comfort were to be found in the great prophecies of Isaiah 40-55 and 56-66. In the difficult religious and governmental problems attendant upon the return of some of the exiles, Haggai and Zechariah were active. The significance of

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1. 1 Sam. 10:25; Deut. 31:26

2. E. Sellin, Introduction to the Old Testament, trans. by W. Montgomery from 3rd German ed. of 1920, N. Y. 1923, p. 76

3. Cf. Deut. 31:26

4. Cf. Josh. 24:1ff.; 1 Sam. 12:7ff.; Deut. 31:9ff.

the latter for an understanding of the attitudes which extended and completed the process of canonization is that his sense of dependence upon his predecessors was especially marked. This feeling, already found in Ezekiel and Deutero-Isaiah, was to continue, and was consequently to increase men's dependence upon those Scriptures which had come from former men of the Spirit.

From what has been said, it will be sufficiently clear that the public reading and pledge of obedience given in the Ezra-Nehemiah period was nothing more than the crest of a wave which had long been gathering force, and which was to communicate its force to the tide that was bearing the sacred writings on to canonical authority. The more formal ratification could not have taken place apart from the stresses of life which led the Jewish people to look to these books for hope and guidance. A recent writer declares, "The initiative role played by the people in every important step taken is generally overlooked. It was the people who took the first step in having the law brought before them and taught to them (Neh. 8:1). It was not thrust upon them from without. Ezra at no time took the initiative. It was the representatives of the community who first brought to the attention of Ezra the extent to which intermarriage had taken place, and who urged that drastic steps be taken to deal with that evil (Ez. 9:1f; 10:7,8). If that assembly was great it was not primarily because of what was done in it by the leaders, but because of the attitude of the community, as expressed in its eagerness and earnestness to hear and fulfill the Torah"[1].

The combination of the new law with the previously existing holy Scriptures (Deuteronomy) took place somewhat later. The priestly writing

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1. Henry Englander, Men of the Great Synagogue, in Hebrew Union College Jubilee Volume, Cincinnati 1925, p. 145-169.

was worked up with those of the Jahwist, Elohist, and Deuteronomist and the Pentateuch was promulgated, the newer provisions which as yet lacked the requisite authority being attached to the Deuteronomic and pre-Deuteronomic pieces.

If from the time of Ezra onward prophets had continued to appear with the immediate oral message needed for new situations as they arose, further additions to the sacred scripture of Israel would have been made much more slowly; but when it was felt that no further prophet was to be expected until the return of Elijah[1], an interest in collecting the writings of the prophets developed. Moreover, the Syrian oppression which led up to the Maccabaean revolt, presented precisely the situation in which these writings could function in strengthening and encouraging the pious of Israel. These factors thus operated to canonize the second division of the Old Testament, the Prophets. Some of the values men found in them are indicated by the writer of Isaiah 34 and of Daniel[2]. The canonization of the prophets, however, must not be construed too strictly, for there was still the possibility that individual writings might receive interpolations by anonymous hands. The collection was sacred, but not as yet unchangeable.

Notwithstanding this possibility, the next phase of development of the Old Testament was not to be confined to mere interpolation into already existing writings, but was destined to form a whole new division, the Kethubim. Amid the suffering attendant upon the political and social turmoil of the Greek and Syrian periods new and insistent questions were arising, questions the more acute because the age-long emphasis upon the nation was now being shifted to the individual. The old theory that righteousness would bring prosperity had broken down, and men were asking why the good

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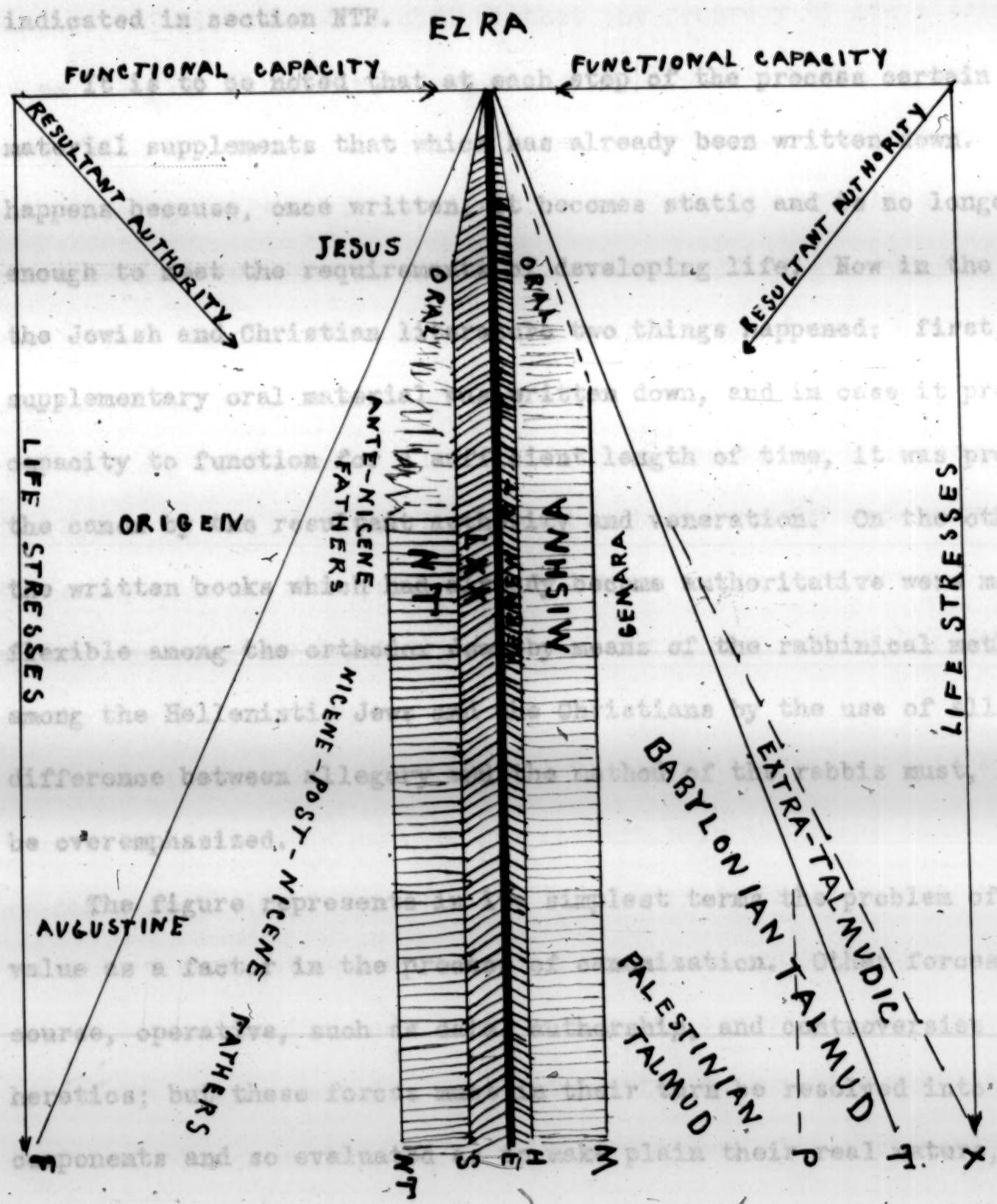
1. Mal. 4:5-6

2. Is. 34:16-17; Dan. 9:2

had to suffer. In their way, some of the older books dealt with the new problems, but as a whole they were not adequate. The result was that the older nucleus of Psalms and Proverbs, collections of which had already existed in the pre-exilic period, received accretions. Sometimes the new books came in by way of attachment to a prophetical book. Questions of age, authorship and original language played a more prominent part than formerly; but the same needs which had made sacred the books of the Law and the Prophets--needs which could not be fully met by a revelation now become static because it had been reduced to writing --were after all the determining factors.

(b) Diagram of the forces operative in the production and canonization of sacred books. Thus the urge toward the production and canonization of new sacred books to meet the requirements of developing life was especially strong among the Jewish people in the centuries immediately preceding and following the birth of Christ. The basic force which was operative was the resultant of two other forces: (1) the vital stress growing out of human needs, and (2) the functional capacity of a given book or collection of books to meet those needs. They are shown graphically in the accompanying figure on page 14.

The heavy line in the diagram represents the Hebrew Old Testament as it existed in the Ezra-Nehemiah period. This continued to be authoritative for both Jews and Christians. The shaded section EH represents the accretions to it and the final stage of the Hebrew canon also common to both. The section ES indicates the excess of the LXX over the Hebrew; it was accepted only by the Hellenistic Jews and the Christians. On the Jewish side the further development of the Mishna is shown by the section HM; its compilation was completed by Jehuda Hanasi (Rabbi), who died ca.200 A.D. On the Christian side, the analogous development was the New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Testament, which is represented by the section SNT. Finally, the section MPTX shows the development of the Old Testament and the Mishnaic material as it came to be embodied in the Talmuds and the extra-Talmudic writings; its Christian analogy is the work of the Nicene and post-Nicene Fathers, indicated in section NTF.

It is to be noted that at each step of the process certain oral material supplements that which has already been written down. This happens because, once written, it becomes static and is no longer flexible enough to meet the requirements of developing life. Now in the case of the Jewish and Christian literature two things happened: first, the supplementary oral material was written down, and in case it proved its capacity to function for a sufficient length of time, it was pressed into the canon by the resultant authority and veneration. On the other hand, the written books which had already become authoritative were made flexible among the orthodox Jews by means of the rabbinical method, and among the Hellenistic Jews and the Christians by the use of allegory. The difference between allegory and the method of the rabbis must, however, not be overemphasized.

The figure represents in its simplest terms the problem of functional value as a factor in the process of canonization. Other forces were, of course, operative, such as date, authorship, and controversies with heretics; but these forces must in their turn be resolved into their vital components and so evaluated as to make plain their real nature, which is often secondary. It is not enough to trace the influence of the Old Testament on the making of the New. It is, indeed, one of the steps; but if the study goes no farther than that, the real problem is still unsolved, viz., Why was the Old Testament itself accepted by the Greeks and the Romans? Again, heretical movements to which the decisive influence for inclusion or exclusion of a book is frequently assigned must themselves be

viewed in the light of larger or smaller bodies of Christians who were trying to secure for themselves a greater measure of religious satisfaction than they could find in the traditional literature and its interpretation. The period of duration of a heresy is measured by its capacity to function in life. It is therefore obvious that the tendency of its literature is to perish with it; but when a book happens to fall afoul of some controversy with heretics, and yet weathers the storm and is admitted into the canon, or again, when it survives its own internal handicaps, or on the other hand is rejected in spite of its intrinsic merit, the problem is vastly more complex and can never be solved apart from a thorough-going consideration of its functional value.

A study of the use of sacred books in the Graeco-Roman world should therefore throw light upon the question just proposed with reference to the acceptance of the Jewish Scriptures on the part of the non-Jewish world, and upon the further problem of the causes underlying the development of the New Testament Scriptures as well.

It has been shown that the Old Testament invited certain attitudes towards itself on the part of its readers. To the first century Gentile reader as well as to the Jew it offered very definite values in the spheres of magic, prophecy and the future life, organization of religious societies and worship, and in education and conduct. The question now arises, To what extent did these capacities to function meet the needs of the Graeco-Roman world, and to what extent were they inadequate? The present study will be confined to this problem.

CHAPTER II

THE FUNCTION OF SACRED BOOKS IN PRE-TALMUDIC JUDAISM

Introduction: The necessity for a balanced view of the relative strength of the Hellenistic and Rabbinical factors.

The first point to be considered is the attitude of the Greek-speaking Jews toward their sacred books as compared with that of Rabbinical Judaism. Inasmuch as students who are more at home in Greek and Latin literature are sometimes inclined to see too much influence from that side, while those who study the beginnings of Christianity from the point of view of Jewish literature and life are also apt to be one-sided, a preliminary examination of the mishnaic and talmudic conception of sacred books will contribute to a clearer understanding of the distinctively Hellenistic elements involved in the discussion. This will involve a study of those apocryphal books which were least affected by Greek influence, and which reflect the needs which gave rise to the rabbinical attitude toward their sacred writings.

The Dispersion had given the Jews a larger point of view. The canonization of the Old Testament had coincided with a period of great inner development. Proselytes were admitted to a larger extent than ever before, and contact with non-Jewish traditions, whether congenial or not, compelled them to defend their book and hence to learn more about it. As a result, there was produced a large apologetical and polemical literature, and the consequent differences of opinion brought sects into being.

Important as these influences were, however, they were not the chief root of reverence for the holy Scriptures: that went deep down into the moral consciousness of the Jewish people, to the conviction that their only

hope of salvation was to do the will of God as revealed in the Torah, the peculiar possession of Israel.

I. The sacred book as a source of wisdom: Sira.

Significantly enough, the first explicit mention of the threefold division of the Old Testament canon is embodied in a statement which emphasizes the necessity of living in accordance with the law. It is found in the Prologue to the Greek translation of the Hebrew of Jesus Ben-Sira[1]. Israel had been given "many and great things through the Law and the Prophets and the others who followed after them", and was consequently entitled to praise because it had made the law a means of imparting wisdom and self-discipline. Ben-Sira had read widely in these books, and he felt quite at home in them; but this was not sufficient: the Sages (Hakamim) must also speak and write for the laity in order that all might make more progress by living according to the law. It was the same spirit that moved his grandson to undertake the difficult task of translation.

Ben-Sira, who wrote ca.180-175 B.C., did not hesitate to claim inspiration. This was not difficult, inasmuch as already in the days of Jeremiah the wise men were recognized along side of the priests and the prophets[2]. While he admitted that he was only a grape gleaner, he nevertheless insisted that he had advanced by the blessing of God[3]. He did not labor for himself; but for all those who were diligently seeking wisdom he had "poured forth doctrine as prophecy"--a phrase which shows

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1. R. H. Charles (ed.), The Apocrypha and Pseudepigrapha of the Old Testament, Two vols., Oxford 1913. Vol. I, p. 216. (Future references will be given simply as "Charles", except quotations, which refer directly to the sources as translated in the above work; unless otherwise mentioned the quotations from Jewish Apocrypha and Pseudepigrapha are from this work.

2. Jer. 18:18 3. Sir. 33:16-18

that there was as yet no rigid conception of a canon[1]. All wisdom, he felt, came from the Lord[2], and on this basis he appealed to his hearers as he lectured on almost every phase of life. He used the inspired writings as his authorities, and then added what he had to say. His estimate of the Old Testament worthies is revealed in the section of his book devoted to the praises of the pious men of old from Enoch down to the high priest Simeon, son of Jochanan, reigning in his day[3]. They were men all-seeing in their prophetic power, clever of speech in the art of scribal instruction; they spoke wise sayings in their tradition, composed psalms and were the authors of books of proverbs[4]. Enoch, according to the Hebrew version of Sira, which reflects the oldest tradition about him, was "a miracle of knowledge to all generations"[5]. Moses was made as glorious as God, who "placed in his hand the commandment, even the law of life and discernment"[6]. By a spirit of might Isaiah saw the future: "Unto eternity he declared the things that shall be, and hidden things before they came to pass"[7]. While, however, the prophetic element of the sacred books thus functioned for Ben-Sira and his school, this was not their chief value for them. Nor were they concerned to find in them a knowledge of the future life. Their view was the traditional attitude of resignation in the face of death[8]. But for them the books of their fathers furnished instruction in every conceivable circumstance of life. All life was suffused with a religious significance, and they were convinced that the fear of the Lord (observance of the law) was glory and exultation, giving gladness and joy and length of days[9]. If a man so desired, he had power to keep the commandment[10]. As far as magic

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1. Sir. 24:33-34
2. Sir. 1:1
3. Sir. 44-50
4. Sir. 44:1-5
5. Sir. 44:16 and note
6. Sir. 45:2.5; cf. Ex. 4:16
7. Sir. 48:25
8. Sir. 40:1-4
9. Sir. 1:11-12; cf. Deut. 6:2
10. Sir. 15:14-20

and divination were concerned they were in opposition, although they recognized that these might be sent from the Most High providentially, in which case they might be used legitimately; yet in contrast with methods of securing guidance they were certain that "without deceit" the law would be fulfilled[1].

Although there was a measure of Greek influence on Ben-Sira in that the older opposition between human and divine wisdom was now being resolved into the identification of virtue and knowledge (wisdom and the law), his great aim was to set forth the superiority of Judaism over Hellenism[2]. By no means the least element of this superiority was Israel's sacred books, inasmuch as they constituted its claim to special distinction among the nations at the very time when its national existence was being threatened. Such close connection of sacred books with national spirit and government was, as will be seen in the case of the Sibylline Books and Rome, not confined to the Jews, and it was destined to be continued in the organization of the Christian Church. Their functional value in giving distinction to the nation as a whole was paralleled by their capacity to give social prestige to a select group within it[3], namely, the scribal class. The scribe could increase wisdom; he searched out the wisdom of the ancients, and was occupied with the prophets of old. He heeded the discourses of men of renown and looked into the hidden meaning of proverbs and dark parables; and he appeared as counselor among princes and gloried in the law of the Lord---in short, he left a name that was never to be blotted out[4]. On the other hand the cattle driver, the soldier, the farmer, the jeweler, the smith and the potter---how could they ever become wise? To be sure their work was indispensable to human life, but

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1. Sir. 34:1-8
2. Oesterley and Box, Charles, Vol. 1, p. 269
3. Cf. the later Gnostics and the Gospel of John
4. Sir. 39:1-11

they were none the less inferior for that, because they did not understand law and justice and expound the instruction of wisdom.

To summarize the values which Ben-Sira and his school found in their sacred books: in them there was wisdom for every sphere of life, political, social, individual; the law of Jehovah they held to be absolutely trustworthy as compared with magic; for the future life they had little concern, but for this life the instruction to be derived from their sacred writings was indispensable, both in the affairs of government and of the life of the individual; and finally, these sacred books entitled the nation to respect, and those who studied them to social distinction.

II. Past history written in the future tense: a source of courage and hope.

(a) The Heavenly Tablets: I Enoch.

The early Hebrew tradition that Enoch was possessed of miraculous knowledge has already been referred to in connection with Ben-Sira[1]. In the second and first centuries B.C. this tradition was of very great use to the literary circle which produced I Enoch. During the period of the composition of the book, 170-64 B.C.[2] Jewish life and thought was everywhere in flux. The book itself advanced conflicting views on the Messiah, the Messianic kingdom, the origin of sin, Sheol, the final judgment, the resurrection, and the nature of the future life[3]. In this state of intellectual and religious ferment, the authority of ancient worthies was especially valuable, for it was precisely this creative period that stood most in need of them: the new adventures in thought and action that had to be made demanded their authentication.

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1. See page 19
2. Date as given by Charles.
3. Charles, Vol. II, p. 164.

It is therefore not surprising that Enoch was represented to have read the entire course of human history from the heavenly tablets. He was said to have read "the book of the deeds of mankind, and of all the children of flesh that shall be upon the earth to the remotest generations"[1]. When all that had happened in the past could be thought of as something more even than prophecy--as something irrevocably written in heaven--it was a short step to the assurance that present difficulties would in the end work out for the good of the righteous. In the heavenly tablets it was written that all goodness and joy and glory are prepared for the spirits of those who have died in righteousness. They were to be recompensed, and their lot was to be more abundant than that of the living. On the other hand the place of sinners was to be Sheol with wretchedness and great tribulation[2]. Enoch, the righteous, had announced righteousness to the good, and one's heart could therefore be strong[3]. The Messiah, variously referred to as "the Anointed One", "the Righteous One", "the Elect One", and "the Son of Man",would come to judge the righteous and the wicked, and the books of the living would be open before him. Worms would be the bed of the rulers of the kingdoms of the world who had trusted in gods made with their own hands and had persecuted those who were faithful to the Lord of Spirits: and they would rise no more. But an inexhaustible fountain of righteousness would fill the thirsty with wisdom; unrighteousness would disappear as a shadow, and earth would be transformed into a blessing.[4]

Especially prominent in I Enoch is the conception of the heavenly record books. The bookkeeping was terribly certain and exact, and the writer did not fail to remind the persecutors of the righteous that all

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1. I Enoch 81:1-2
2. I Enoch 103
3. I Enoch 81:7
4. Cf. especially chs. 45-51.

their oppression was being written down every day until the day of their judgment, and that it was futile for sinners to say, "All our sins shall not be searched out and written down"[1]. Not even the seventy guardian angels, who were pictured as shepherds in the dream visions[2], were exempt; for when they overstepped the limits of their authority and killed more of the "sheep"[3] than the prescribed number, the record of each individual sheep destroyed was written down day by day[4]. Then the record was carried up and laid down before the Lord of the sheep, who took the book into his own hand and having read it, sealed it and laid it down until the day of judgment. When that day came, the books were opened and the seventy shepherds were condemned to the fiery abyss on the basis of the record they contained[5].

On the other hand, the promise to the righteous was, "I swear unto you that in heaven the angels remember you for good before the glory of the Great One: and your names are written before the glory of the Great One."

What is the significance of all this with respect to the function of sacred books? A moment's reflection will show that the historical books of Israel were simply written in the future tense, and that by way of reinforcing their authority duplicates of them were represented as existing in heaven. The same was true of the citizenship records of the nation. History written in this form was a more formidable weapon; for

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1. I Enoch 98:7-8; 104:7
2. I Enoch 83-90
3. The people of Israel
4. I Enoch 89:71-72; 90:17.20
5. I Enoch 90:20-27. A similar conception of the heavenly record books is found in II Baruch 24:1: "For behold! The days come and the books shall be opened in which are written the sins of all those who have sinned; and again also the treasuries in which the righteousness of all those who have been righteous in creation is gathered".

the "predictions", of course, had come true in the events. The result was that the genuinely predictive elements of the sacred books, although inextricably confused with history, commanded more confidence than they otherwise could have enjoyed. How far the first readers of such books as I Enoch were conscious of the device is difficult to determine; certain it is that its effectiveness was proportional to the interval of time between the writer and the reader. In any case the notion of a recording angel consoled the righteous man for the disappointments of the past and gave him courage for the future. As far, however, as it threatened the oppressors of Israel, it was more like a stick brandished by a warrior who had lost his weapons.

The disobedience of the seventy shepherds was a device to explain why the righteous as well as the sinners of Israel had to suffer, and the book which contained it could therefore expect to be highly esteemed. Yet there was danger that the wicked might misinterpret it. The writer therefore warned men not to lie and misinterpret the words of uprightness[1]. For their part, the righteous were admonished not to permit the words of Enoch to be effaced from their hearts, inasmuch as sinners would tempt men to do evil to wisdom. Those who set at naught the words of the righteous would have no hope of life[2]. Worse still, the wicked would write lies and godless words so that men might hear them and act godlessly towards their neighbor. Contrariwise when the time once came that men would write down truthfully all the words of Enoch, without changing or diminishing them, - then books would be given to the righteous and the wise to become a cause of joy and uprightness and much wisdom, so that all righteous men who had learned therefrom might be recompensed.

Even the natural science of the day was presented as a revelation in the book of the Heavenly Luminaries[3]. After dealing with the sun, the

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1. I Enoch 104:9 2. I Enoch 98:14-15 3. I Enoch 82:1

moon and its phases, the lunar year, and the four quarters of the world, Enoch declared, "And now, my son Methuselah, all these things I am recounting to thee and writing down for thee, and I have revealed to thee everything, and given thee books concerning all these: so preserve, my son Methuselah, the books from thy father's hand, and (see) that thou deliver them to the generations of the world". This is to be read in connection with Jubilees 10:10-14, which was nearly contemporary. There the science of medicine was revealed to Noah by Raphael, who was represented as saying, "And we explained to Noah all the medicines of their diseases, together with their seductions, how he might heal them with herbs of the earth. And Noah noted down all things in a book as we instructed him concerning every kind of medicine". These books he gave to Shem, whose school, according to rabbinic tradition, Abraham attended. Pirke R. El. VIII Jalk. Gen. sec. 41 has it that Abraham received from Shem the knowledge of the calendar, which was imparted to Adam from heaven, and which had come down to Shem through Enoch and Noah[1].

(b) The realization in time of what was eternally written: Jubilees. History written in the future tense in order that the momentum of its fulfilment might evoke confidence and unconquerable assurance of the glorious destiny of the Jewish people found an even more striking example in the book of Jubilees. Its author was a Pharisee and a supporter of the Maccabaean pontificate. His task was to defend Judaism against Hellenism. To accomplish it he glorified the law as an eternal ordinance and represented the patriarchs as models of piety. He glorified Israel and denounced the Gentiles, insisting on a separation between the two. The law as a whole was to him "the realization in time of what was in a sense

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1. Quoted from Singer by Charles in: The Book of Jubilees, p.134

timeless and eternal. It was observed not only on earth but also in heaven"[1]; but this did not necessarily mean, as Charles implies, that the prophet could no longer exist, or that he "could only gain a hearing by issuing his work under the name of some ancient worthy". It is rather to be interpreted in the light of a natural tendency to distrust contemporary prophecy, and as the line of least resistance which led back to the authoritative experiences of men of the past. In fact the "prophets" themselves had constantly appealed to the past in order that their words might carry greater conviction. The real difference between them and the pseudonymous writers was more in the mechanics of method than in spirit and aim, a distinction, moreover, which must be kept in mind in considering the work of the later Rabbis, for the Rabbis like the prophets felt that they were speaking and doing the will of God.

Before proceeding farther it is well to reflect that a given document yields two items of information regarding the use of sacred books. In the first place it reveals the author's own use and attitude toward the sacred books in his possesstion, and in the second place, by the device adopted to secure public acceptance and by the degree of authority which the writer ventures to claim for himself, it shows how the sacred books functioned in the lives of his contemporaries. With respect to the second it is to be noted that the author represented his book to be a revelation of God to Moses, a supplement to and an interpretation of the Pentateuch or "first law". It was partly a "secret republication of the traditions handed down from father to son in antediluvian and subsequent times. From the time of Moses onwards it was preserved in the hands of the priesthood till the time came for its being made known"[2].

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1. Charles, Vol. II, p.8. 2. Charles, Vol. II, p.7.

Thus, according to chapter 32:21-17, an angel had descended from heaven with seven tablets in his hands and had given them to Jacob at Bethel. In them Jacob read all that would befall him and his sons throughout the ages. After reading them he was commanded to write down everything he had seen and read; but he protested: "Lord, how can I remember all that I have read and seen?" The divine reply was, "I will bring all things to thy remembrance"[1], and accordingly when he awoke he remembered everything which he had read and seen and wrote it down. Furthermore, he was said to have told his sons everything that would befall them in the land of Egypt and what would come upon them in the last days[2].

A similar experience had come to Abraham in answer to his prayer for guidance in the matter or returning to Ur of the Chaldees. "And the Lord God said (to the angel), 'Open his mouth and his ears, that he may hear, and speak with his mouth, with the language which has been revealed'; for it had ceased from the mouths of all the children of men from the day of the day of the overthrow (of Babel). And I opened his mouth and his ears and his lips, and I began to speak with him in Hebrew in the tongue of the creation"[3]. After this Abraham is said to have taken the books of his fathers, which were written in Hebrew, and to have transcribed them, the angel acting as interpreter of the passages he could not understand. The six rainy months he spent in study. Thus the very language of the sacred books of the Jews was thought to have been revealed, and the unbroken tradition through Noah to the creation was believed to have been maintained and handed down to future generations; for according to Jubilees 45:16 Jacob gave all his books and the books of his fathers to Levi to preserve and renew them for his children.

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1. Jub. 32:25. Cf. John 14:26.
2. Jub. 45:14.
3. Jub. 12:26; cf. the whole passage 25-27.

The writer's own attitude toward the sacred books is revealed at the very beginning of the book[1]. He represented his book to be a secret revelation received by Moses himself, but the basis of his work was the Old Testament writings. He believed that the Lord had commanded the angel of the presence to write for Moses the history of the world from the beginning of creation until the building of his sanctuary among men for all eternity. The angel in turn gave the command to Moses[2]: "Write the complete history of creation, how in six days the Lord God finished all his works and all that he created, and kept Sabbath on the seventh day and hallowed it for all ages, and appointed it as a sign for all his works". Here then is the author's interpretation of Ex. 34:27, "And Jahweh said unto Moses, Write thou these words", and of Deut. 10:4, "And he (Jahweh) wrote on the tables according to the first writing the ten commandments".

A closer examination of the specific ideas and practices which the author of Jubilees wished to reinforce by his appeal to the sacred books of his race will be of advantage. It may be well to repeat at the outset that the heavenly tablets were the projection backward, the change of tense from past to future, the elevation from earth to heaven, of the history of the Jews. National aspirations and customs derived added and solemn sanction thereby. The law of circumcision was an eternal ordinance written on the heavenly tablets[3]; the Sabbath was kept in heaven before it was known on earth, and even then Israel alone of all the nations of the earth was sanctified to keep it[4]; the prohibition of the eating of blood was written for continual observance[5]; the law concerning the tithing of the tithe was ordained on the heavenly tablets to be fulfilled from year to year[6]; Abraham celebrated the feast of Tabernacles according to the

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1. Jub. 1:26-2:1
2. Jub. 2:1
3. Jub. 15:25
4. Jub. 2:31-33
5. Jub. 6:12
6. Jub. 9:10.16

heavenly tablets and Israel was therefore to do likewise[1]; the feast of Weeks was connected with the rainbow covenant and was likewise written in heaven; and the hope of the Messianic kingdom was set down in the tables of the divisions of the years[2]. The author was especially interested in Levi and Levi's successors as high priests and civil rulers, and in spite of his embarrassment by the severe treatment of the Shechemites at the hands of Levi and Simeon[3], he could write that their deed was recorded in their favor in heaven, and that to a thousand generations Levi's righteousness would be remembered, whereas those who transgressed would be recorded in the book of those who were to be rooted out of the earth[4]. Each man's course of life and judgment were predetermined on the heavenly tablets[5], and the earliest attested Jewish instance of the expectation of a spiritual immortality rather than a ressurrection of the body[6] was emphasized and authenticated by an appeal to the words which Moses wrote down. This hope is expressed in Chapter 23:31-32, "And their bones shall rest in the earth, and their spirits shall have much joy, and they shall know that it is the Lord who executes judgment, and shows mercy to hundreds and thousands and to all that love him"; it is followed by the command to Moses to write down these words: "For thus they are written, and they record (them) on the heavenly tablets for the generations forever".

III. The sacred book in time of war: I and II Maccabees.

Meanwhile the military crisis under the Maccabees and the attempt of the Syrian government to destroy the Scriptures had reacted to make them all the more sacred to the Jews. At Mizpah on the day of prayer before the battle with Gorgias they spread out one of the rolls of the law which the

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1. Jub. 16:28-30
2. Jub. 1:29
3. Gen. 34:25-26
4. Jub. 30:20-23
5. Jub. 5:13
6. Charles, Vol. II, p.9-10.

Gentiles had sought out and defaced with the images of their gods as a witness before God of their blasphemy. The laws of Moses relating to warfare were observed. According to II Macc. 8:23ff. Judas, before the battle with Nicanor, cited the example of God's help against Sennacherib to inspirit his soldiers and get them ready to die for their laws and for their country and then made Eleazar read aloud from the holy book. Then they went into battle with "God's Help" as a watchword, and the result by the help of the Almighty was a victory. The necessity of fighting for the law, and their confidence in its utility in times of crisis increased the veneration in which their Scriptures were held.

IV. The sacred book and salvation by obedience to law: II Baruch.

The high political hopes aroused by the Maccabaean successes were disappointed. Yet the confidence in the efficacy of the law to save, and the veneration of the sacred books of the fathers which from the time of Ezra had been bound up with it, were only strengthened by the internal anarchy and political vassalage of the century immediately preceding the beginning of the Christian era. As the little nation broke itself to pieces, its books, of course, were torn loose from their age-long associations; but immediately they became the center and the support of the new national life which now no longer depended upon territorial and political limitations. The dramatic episode reported of Jochanan ben Zachai (10-80 A.D.) is characteristic of the transition. Having escaped from the city of Jerusalem during the Roman siege by getting himself carried out in a coffin, he went to Titus and saluted him forthwith as the future Emperor of Rome. Later when Titus actually became Emperor he offered to grant Jochanan any request he might have to make. It was simply this, "Give me Jabneh and her wise men". A thing seemingly so trifling was

almost disdainfully granted; but here the pen revived what the sword had apparently destroyed, and the Jew gained a new lease of life in this world.

This transition must now be examined more closely. The first source to be studied is II Baruch. It was written during the latter half of the first century A.D. Its authors were orthodox Jews, and it abounds in confidence in the law and in man's ability to keep it. In contrast to I Enoch there is in it very little appeal to the authority of the written as over against the oral law. For example, Abraham's law was unwritten, whereas according to Enoch he had studied it from books[1]. Nevertheless, II Baruch indicates an increasing satisfaction and confidence in the law, whether oral or written. A point of cardinal importance lies in the fact that the emphasis on the law varied according to the prominence of the Messianic hope, being greater when the latter was not strong[2].

Naturally the law was most glorified when there was neither expectation of a Messiah nor hope of the restoration of Jerusalem. A certain indifference to the terrors of the end was possible when it was felt that the law would protect those who had its fruits in their hearts in the day when the Mighty One would shake the whole creation[3]. The Jews were a celebrated people who had received one law from One; this law would aid them, and the surpassing wisdom which was in them would help them[4]. In the troubleus times of the end there would not be many wise, and even those who knew would be most silent; yet in a time when "promises not a few would be recounted, some to prove idle, some to be confirmed"[5], the law could be trusted. By it men could be justified and progressively glorified in the world which does not die[6]. In this world Israel would not fall so long as God's statutes were kept[7].

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1. II Bar. 57:1
2. Charles, Vol. II, p.478.
3. II Bar. 32:1
4. II Bar. 48:24
5. II Bar. 48:33-34
6. II Bar. 51:1-3
7. II Bar. 48:22

Even when the restoration of Jerusalem was looked for, the law also held a significant place. The disposition of the national fate had, of course, to be left to Jahweh, but he had also given his people something to do. What their task was is expressed in Baruch's parting words to the elders, "Do ye therefore so far as ye are able instruct the people, for that labor is ours. For if ye teach them, ye will quicken them and.... There shall not be wanting to Israel a wise man, nor a son of the law to the race of Jacob"[1].

The Lord had given to Israel a law more excellent than to any other people, but they had transgressed and had consequently suffered vengeance and captivity[2]. The people whom Baruch just before his departure is said to have summoned to the way of righteousness had asked him to write also to the two and a half tribes in Babylon "an epistle of doctrine and a scroll of hope". These were their words: "For the shepherds of Israel have perished, and the lamps which gave light are extinguished, and the fountains have withheld their stream whence we used to drink"[3]. Baruch replied, "Shepherds and lamps and fountains come from the law: and though we depart, yet the law abideth. If therefore ye have respect to the law and are intent upon wisdom, a lamp will not be wanting, and a shepherd will not fail, and a fountain will not dry up"[4].

"An epistle of doctrine and a scroll of hope"---this was the need of the Dispersion in the first century A.D.; and so "Baruch", although he felt that the writing of letters would in reality add little to the all-sufficiency of the law, promised to write to the exiles in Babylon and send the letter by means of <u>men</u>; and in like manner he would write to the nine tribes and a half, sending it by an <u>eagle</u>. According to Charles, the

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1. II Bar. 45-46:1-4 2. IIBar. 77:3-4 3. II Bar. 77:13 4. II Bar. 77:15-16

first of these epistles has been preserved in I Baruch 1:1-3 and 3:9-4:29.[1] It was written about 78 A.D. to give consolation and doctrine to the Jews who had passed through the terrible crisis of the year 70. All this was veiled by being put back into the days of the Babylonian captivity. The book purported to have been read before Jechonias, the son of Joakim king of Judah and "all the people from the least unto the greatest, even of all them that dwelt at Babylon by the river Sud". The following quotation[2] gives its atmosphere and its attitude toward the law:

"This is our God,
And there shall none other be accounted in comparison of him.
He hath found out all the way of knowledge,
And hath given it unto Jacob his servant,
And to Israel that is beloved of him.
(Afterward did she appear upon earth,
And was conversant with men.)
This is the book of the commandments of God,
And the law that endureth forever:
All they that hold it fast are appointed to life[3]:
But such as leave it shall die.
Turn thee O Jacob, and take hold of it:
Walk towards her shining in the presence of the light thereof.
Give not thy glory unto another,
Nor the things that are profitable to thee unto a strange generation.
O Israel, happy are we:
For the things that are pleasing to God are made known unto us."

The law was felt to be the only refuge; it was to stand forever to give life to its possessors. Thus in the very midst of national despair Israel could be happy that God's will was made known unto them. This feeling comes to yet clearer expression in the consolatory epistle to the nine and a half tribes[4]:

"But now the righteous have been gathered
And the prophets have fallen asleep,
And we also have gone forth from the land,
And Zion has been taken from us,
And we have nothing now save the Mighty One and his law.
If therefore we direct and dispose our hearts,
We shall receive everything that we lost,
And much better things than we lost by many times.
For what we have lost was subject to corruption,
And what we receive shall not be corruptible."

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1. Charles, Vol. II, p.476 2. I Bar. 3:35-4:4 4. II Bar. 78-86
3. The Syriac has the variant: "To all that hold it fast it shall be (for) life."

In possession of the law, the Jews were still in the spirit and power of their liberty[1], and that too with the added comfort that Jahweh had shown to them what would happen in the future[2].

The use of the epistle among the Jews of the Dispersion in the first century A.D. to maintain their national spirit by recommending the study and the observance of the law is of great significance in determining the degree of Paul's originality in the use he made of the epistle in his work. We have to ask to what extent the fundamental quest for salvation which engaged both Jew and Christian produced a similarity in methods. There is evidence to show that considerable use of the epistolary form was made by the Jewish people. For example, Baruch was to be read before their congregations with care, and meditated on, especially on fast days; and it was to be the means of keeping its author fresh in their memories[3]. Second Maccabees furnishes an earlier example[4]. It was written by an Alexandrian Jew to foster reverence among the Jews of Egypt for the temple in Jerusalem, and to urge the observance of the Maccabaean festivals as a bond of union between the Jews of Palestine and Egypt[5]. In view of such evidence one is led to ask to what extent the Hellenistic Jews were accustomed to the public reading of such exhortations. If such was the case it would have made unnecessary any specific recommendation on the part of the New Testament writers to have their own letters read. It must be remembered that II Maccabees and I Baruch actually became a part of the LXX, and that II Baruch, although written by Pharisaic Jews early gained a larger circulation among Christians than among Jews. It is an illustration of the manner in which a writing which dealt with the law was added to the collection of sacred books because of its intrinsic practical value.

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1. II Bar. 85:7
2. II Bar. 85:8
3. II Bar. 86
4. II Macc. 1-2; 125-50 B.C.
5. Charles, Vol. 1, p. 169

CHAPTER III

THE USE OF SACRED BOOKS IN THE RABBINICAL SCHOOLS

I. The divergence between apocalyptic-Hellenistic and legalistic-Rabbinical Judaism: IV Ezra.

With its confidence in man's ability to keep the law, and its assurance of salvation thereby, II Baruch stands just a few years after Paul. It is contemporary with the period of Gospel writing, and thus lies in the widening cleft between orthodox Judaism and Christianity. The literature thus far considered appealed to both Jew and Christian: this is shown by the temporary popularity of II Baruch among adherents of the new religion. Yet, in a sense, that book stood at the parting of the ways; in fact, it could not have happened otherwise than that its emphasis on the sufficiency of the law should finally result in opposition and rejection of it on the part of Christians[1].

Almost contemporary with II Baruch, which was edited about 120 A.D., was IV Ezra. In sharp contrast, however, was its despair of man's ability to keep the law[2]; and yet it exalted the law by pointing out that it was the acceptance of it, and not the ability to keep it, that was the standard by which men were to be judged at last. The author was attempting to commend apocalyptic to the rabbinical circles; but his book represents only a temporary fusion between the apocalyptic and the rabbinical types. Precisely this fact, however, makes it valuable for the determination of the comparative functions of sacred books in Judaism and Christianity.

The law was a special divine gift to Israel, but the fatal difficulty was that God, who had given it, had not at the same time taken away from man his evil impulse[3]. No longer could men repeat the language of the

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1. Charles, Vol. II, p.470
2. IV Ezra 9:36
3. The yeser-ha-ra. IV Ez. 3:19ff.

Psalms of Solomon: "Our whole works are subject to our own choice and power to do right or wrong"[1]. Nevertheless, like seed, the law had been sown in Israel, and just because it was God's seed, its fruit could not perish: it was the recipients of the law who were destroyed[2]. Here was the most difficult problem for the seer: Israel had been given over to the heathen. "The law of our fathers", he complained, "has been brought to destruction, the written covenants exist no more[3]"; the best that could be hoped from it was that a few would be saved. But here was another difficulty: how could the rejection of the masses be justified? The seer could only reflect that the ways of the God who had predetermined the course of the world were past finding out by man with his limited intelligence. Meanwhile he kept firm grip on the faith that God loved Israel[4], and he looked for a purification and renovation of the present world[5]. In the end the oppressors would be destroyed "without labor by the law which is compared with fire"[6]. The consummation would come by the agency of God alone.

The signs that precede it bear striking resemblances to the portents found on the pages of Greek and Latin writers. Unheard of iniquity; day and night reversed with respect to sun and moon; blood trickling from wood; stones crying out; birds in general flight; earthquakes and fire; women bearing monsters; one-year-old infants speaking; intelligence hidden— these were to be the signs of the end[7]; and when the Age which was about to pass away was sealed, the celestial books in which were recorded the deeds of the righteous and the wicked would "be opened before the face of the firmament," and all would see together[8].

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1. Ps. of Sol. 9:7 (4)
2. IV Ez. 9:29-37
3. IV Ez. 4:23
4. IV Ez. 5:40
5. IV Ez. 7:114
6. IV Ez. 13:38
7. IV Ez. 5:1-13. The Ezra Apocalypse had assumed form sometime before 70 A.D.: Charles, Vol. II, p.551
8. IV Ez. 6:20

All too plain was the political impotence of the Jewish nation under the Roman Empire. The editor of IV Ezra therefore had to console and revenge himself and his people by contemplating its visionary disappearance. According to the analysis of the sources given by Box[1], the original eagle vision may date from the closing years of Domitian (ca.95 A.D.). The three Flavians were represented by the three heads of an eagle. The hypothesis of Box is that the redactor (ca.120 A.D.) took this vision over and represented under its three heads Trajan, Hadrian, and Lusius Quietus, the third of whom had been very severe with the rebellious Jews, first in Mesopotamia, and later in Palestine (A.D. 116-117). This would show that the final editor had come to appreciate the satisfaction to be derived from such literary vengeance, and was trying to recommend it to the circles among whom he moved. How was he to do this?

Ezra's popularity among Rabbinical circles at once suggested his name. To him as the restorer of the law it was eminently fitting to address this command: "This is the dream that thou didst see, and this is its interpretation. Thou alone hast been found worthy to learn this mystery of the Most High. Therefore write all these things that thou hast seen in a book and put them in a secret place; and thou shalt teach them to the wise of the people whose hearts thou knowest are able to comprehend and keep these mysteries[2]". Besides the prestige of Ezra's name, secrecy and subtle flattery contributed toward the end the writer of the Apocalypse desired. The presumption that the law had been burnt by Nebuchadnezzar exactly suited his purpose; for if the law had been burnt, it must have been restored. This Ezra had accomplished; but he was presumed to have

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1. Charles, Vol. II, p.612 2. IV Ez. 12:36-38

done more than that: he had written secret books in addition to it. In response to the voice out of a bush, which had bidden him treasure up for himself and for those who sympathized with him these dreams and their interpretations, he had prayed for the Holy Spirit that he might write for generations yet unborn all that had happened in the world since the beginning, in order that men might be able to find the path, and that those who desired life might have it. He was directed to take many writing tablets together with five men who could write swiftly. "And then come hither", ran the command, "and I will light the lamp of understanding in thy heart, which shall not be extinguished until what thou art about to write shall be completed. And when thou shalt have finished, some things thou shalt publish and some things thou shalt deliver in secret to the wise". On the following day a voice bade him drink from a cup filled with water, the color of which was like fire. Then, he tells us, "My heart poured forth understanding, wisdom grew in my breast, and my spirit retained its memory: and my mouth opened, and was no more shut. And the Most High gave understanding to the five men, and they wrote what was dictated in order, in characters which they knew not.....So in forty days were written ninety-four books. And it came to pass when the forty days were fulfilled, that the Most High spake unto me saying, The twenty-four books that thou hast written, publish, that the worthy and the unworthy may read therein: but the seventy last thou shalt keep to deliver them to the wise among thy people. For in them is the spring of understanding, the fountain of wisdom and the stream of knowledge"[1].

The fundamental forces which first produce books and then make them sacred were here at work. On the one hand there were the books of the Law, the Prophets and the Writings, which afforded great comfort and assurance; but they needed to be brought abreast of advancing thought and

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1. IV Ez. 14, passim.

morality. They did not answer satisfactorily such poignant questions as, Why was Israel, in spite of its possession of the law, under oppression by godless races? Why was man so created that he sinned? How can the fewness of the saved be reconciled with the character of God? The answers to these questions demanded growth on the part of the authoritative revelation. The method of the writer of IV Ezra was to add to the sacred books a writing embodying his own interpretation and hopes, but his effort was too much like an attempt to glue together two loosely fitting pieces of wood, and it could not stand the weight imposed upon them.

II. The Rabbinical method of relating the oral to the written law.

The rabbis were much more painstaking and minutely exact in adjusting the new to the old. A helpful way of conceiving their situation may be to compare the environment in which sacred books are written to a chemical solution in which, as reagents are introduced, precipitates are formed. The precipitate may fall to the bottom, or be diffused through the solution, or rise to the top. Written materials would correspond to the first, while the two latter would represent the oral tradition. Whenever these suspended or floating oral elements become charged with too great a burden of reliance upon them as authoritative they tend either to be reduced to writing or to be abandoned in favor of elements more stable. In the former case they may attach themselves to sacred books already in existence and thus form a new canon. The probability of this is proportionate to the affinity of the new with the old. In the latter case the abandoned elements remain to serve as possible centers of attraction to those in search of authority. The analogy must not be pressed too far, but for an observer who is outside of the environment and removed from it in time it is useful thus to picture the process. In this respect its limitations are somewhat

similar to the mathematical view of the process shown in the diagram given on page fourteen, for life movements cannot be reduced to the absolute precision of diagrammatic representation.

Oral tradition among the Jews developed side by side with the written. As time passed, the distinction between them became less clearly marked, the oral being as authoritative as the written. The opposition of the Sadducees, however, and the tendency of the Am-ha-aretz to disregard many of the provisions of the law, soon changed all this; for the former denied the validity of the oral law, while the latter were too busy with the concerns of daily life to give it minute attention. Consequently the Pharisees, who upheld it, were compelled to show that it was an integral part of, and inseparable from the written code. It had to be shown that the oral law was contained in the written, and was deducible therefrom. To accomplish this a set of exegetical rules was devised by Hillel, Akiba and others[1].

A good example of their method is seen in their proof of the authority of the oral law by appeal to the written: "What means that which is written, 'And I will give thee the tables of stone, and the law and the commandment, which I have written, that thou mayest teach them'[2]. 'Two tables of stone; i.e. the Decalogue; 'law', i.e. the Pentateuch; 'commandment' i.e. the Mishnah; 'which I have written' i.e. the Prophets and Hagiographa; 'that thou mayest teach them' i.e. the Gemara. The verse teaches that all of them were given on Sinai[3]".

Of course, it must not be supposed that there was complete agreement in method among the Jewish interpreters of the law. Very often the minority

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1. M. Mielziner, Introduction to the Talmud, 3rd ed., N.Y. 1925, p.117-187.
2. Ex. 24:12
3. A. Cohen, The Babylonian Talmud: Tractate B^{e}Rakot, Cambridge 1921, Intro.xxiv ff. Future references and citations from this work will be given simply as "Cohen".

as well as the majority opinion is given. So frequent were the disagreements, both of individual teachers and of whole schools, that it is artificial and misleading to speak of the Jewish as over against the Hellenistic attitude and use of sacred books without making due allowance for these differences within "orthodox" Judaism itself.

A particular case in point concerns the question of the rabbinical use of allegory as compared with that of the Hellenistic Jews. The Palestinian mode has been described as symbolic or typologic, and the Alexandrian as philosophical or mystical. To the former "any hidden meaning found in the scriptures by means of allegorism was an inherest part of the history of the religious life, the Torah of the Jews"[1], while the latter was not thus limited. The difference lay in the sphere of religious practices; but both the Hellenistic and the Rabbinical Jew had recourse to the Scriptures for their authority. The danger of allegory as employed by the Hellenists was that it led to laxity of practice in such matters as the Sabbath, Fast Days, and circumcision. Philo himself had rebuked such radicals, but not all the liberals were likeminded with him, and consequently the rabbis were driven to exercise strict control over the use of allegory.

In Palestine there were two classes of allegorists, the Dorshe Reshumoth and the Dorshe Hamuroth. The former were the interpreters of words as signs, figures and symbols to remind their hearers of something else than was expressed by the literal meaning. They did not, of course, deny that the words had a literal meaning as well, but they thought that the mere literal interpretation did not exhaust that meaning. They began with those passages of Scripture which absolutely demanded an allegorical

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1. Jewish Encyclopedia, Art. "Allegory".

interpretation, and then extended the method to those which allowed it, even if they did not demand it. But so much danger to the observance of the law resulted that this method was prohibited in dealing with commandments. It cannot be too strongly insisted upon, however, that the important factor was the change in practice: it came first, and the interpretation was secondary, and for the purpose of justifying it. The oldest and most original of the sayings of the Dorshe Reshumoth is found in Sifre referring to the passage in Deut. 11:22, "To walk in all his ways and to cleave unto him". The interpretation is, "If thou desirest to recognize Him who by his word created the world, learn to understand and interpret correctly what the Scripture says about Him, for in this way thou canst recognize the Holy One, blessed be He, and cleave unto Him and follow His ways"[1]. Here the motive was to explain away the anthropomorphism inconsistent with a spiritual God.

The Dorshe Hamuroth were the interpreters of what was grave, important, weighty, significant, or essential in the law. Thus in interpreting Deut. 18:3, "They shall give unto the priest the shoulder and the two cheeks and the maw", they quoted Num. 25:7, "And he (Phinehas) took a javelin in his hand", to show that the shoulder corresponds to or is a symbol of the arm of a priest. From Ps. 106:30, "Then stood up Phinehas and prayed" ("executed judgment"), they likened the two cheeks to the praying of the priest, and from Num. 25:8 they concluded that the maw represents the appetites. The meaning was not that the priests received these three things as a reward for the exploits of their ancestor Phinehas; they were symbols to remind the priest of his duty: the shoulder that he must use the strength of his hand as Phinehas did, the cheek that he must use his

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1. Ed. Friedmann, 85a.

Mouth and his speech in the service of God in praying or teaching as Phinehas did, and the maw that he must fight against the lower animal desires as Phinehas fought against lewdness. These gifts symbolized the priest's duties, and the main importance of the law was to get him to remember them. Again, the fulfilment of the law bidding the people give these portions to the priest was of minor importance, provided he was faithful to his duties. The consequence of such interpretation is obvious, for the logical step would be to devise some more convenient method of keeping the priest mindful of what was required of him. In Palestine the Jewish Christians could employ this method to show the superiority of their interpretation of their religion and to justify the changes of practice they were making.

It was, therefore, not so much the method of exegesis that differentiated the Rabbinical interpreter from the Hellenistic, as the length to which they were prepared to go in the direction in which it led them and to accept its practical consequences. To illustrate: In Mt. 12:1-14 the answer of the Pharisees themselves to the question, "Is it lawful to heal on the Sabbath day?" would have been that in cases where life is in danger it is permitted, but not in others. The Christians, however, were inclined to go farther, and to extend mercy to those who were not in immediate danger. Hence the danger to the intricate legal system--a system which the orthodox passionately believed had been implicit in the Torah and organically developed therefrom--was very real. In Palestine, in particular, the resentment against the allegorical method grew great, but it was a resentment due to the fact that the method was being employed to justify innovations in practice. Nevertheless the rabbis themselves had to continue to adapt the words of the Torah to the varying circumstances of their people.[1]

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1. On the subject of the rabbinical use of allegory see J.Z. Lauterbach in JQR NS 1, p.291-333 and 503-531. (1910-11).

Nor was this difficult to do: all that was necessary was to "turn it and turn it over again, for everything is in it"[1]. The very rules of interpretation derived their support from the written Torah. The underlying principle of the method of R. Akiba, says Mielziner[2], was that the language of Torah differs from human language. "Here not a word, not a syllable and not even a letter is superfluous, but all is essential and of vital importance to define the intention of a law and to hint at deductions to be made therefrom". Although Akiba's extreme rules were modified by those of R. Ishmael, they were still favored by many rabbis..

III. The reduction of the oral law to writing: the Mishna.

The oral tradition could thus be authenticated by reading it into the Scriptures and then reading it out of them again. The next phase of the development was the reduction of this oral material itself to writing. The step was taken with some hesitancy. As late as the third century A.D. there was a curious aversion to writing down the oral law. Johanan bar Nappaha (Palestinian) said: "Whoever writes down Halachoth is as one who burns the Torah". It has been widely assumed that this prohibition was absolute, but Johanan only directed his restriction against the Halachoth. Although there was considerable opposition to writing the oral law, there was no formal or universal prohibition, and what restriction there was, was directed against writing for public rather than for private use. Lauterbach's view[3] is that the commentary of R. Josi b. Halafta (130-160 A.D.) "like so many other teachings and Halakhoth was written down by students in their private scrolls or notebooks. These private scrolls were not intended for publication, but merely to assist the memory of the student...The collections of such sayings contained in the notebooks of students were

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1. Aboth 5:25 2. Introduction, p.125 3. JQR 8:385-483

copied and used by later students and subsequently used later by the compilers or redactors of the talmudic works". This is certainly more credible than the supposition that the mass of mishnaic material was mentally compiled by Rabbi (Jehuda-ha-Nasi, born 135 A.D.). Even before his day there were collections of halachic material: indeed, that of R. Meir (ca.130-160), which in turn went back to Akiba's (110-135), was the basis of Rabbi's work. Probably both the Mishna of Meir and that of Akiba were never as a whole put into writing. How much was then written, and how much was transmitted by memory is unknown; but some teachers in order to assist their memory had "secret scrolls" for their own use, on which they wrote single theses of the traditional law[1], and collections bearing on particular aspects of the traditional material were employed by the redactors at least in their oldest elements. Examples are Middoth, which was attributed to Eliezer b. Ja{aqob, whose life goes back to a time when the temple was still standing, and Tamid and Joma, which were attributed to Šim{on of Miçpa, a contemporary of Gamliel I, the teacher of Paul. At present opinions differ as to when our Mishna was written down. After listing the most prominent of those who incline to the view that the Mishna was transmitted orally until the sixth century, Mielziner goes on to say[2], "More plausible is the opposite opinion holding that R. Jehuda Hanasi wrote out the Mishna in full". This much is clear: there was a gradual crystallization of the oral elements into writing, so that a new written authority, the Mishna took its place by the side of the Hebrew Old Testament. Orthodox Jews regarded the connection between the two as something more than a mere external one; it was implicit in the Old Testament as the oak is in the acorn.

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1. Mielziner, Introduction, p.4
2. Mielziner, Introduction, p.6

No sooner had the Mishna been written down than it itself had to be interpreted. The resulting oral material (the Gemara) together with the residue of that which had not been included in the Mishna, was then written in its turn, and the Mishna plus the Gemara came to compose the Talmuds, Palestinian and Babylonian. To follow the history of this process, however, is not properly a part of this study.

IV. The functional values of sacred books in Rabbinical Judaism.

(a) A revelation of the will of God. On the other hand, as sources of information for investigating the functional values of sacred books in Judaism they are important. What were these values? Basic for all of them was the Jewish conviction of the necessity of doing the will of God. It was a conviction that had been indelibly stamped upon the Jews by the political, economic and social vicissitudes of their nation. To be sure, the motive was not unmixed with self interest, in that the ultimate restoration of the national life, and the personal prosperity of its individual members were thought to be conditional on the study of the law and obedience to it. An illustration of the point of view is the saying of R. Tarphon, who was probably put to death in A.D. 117: "If thou hast learned much Torah, they will give thee much hire; and the master of thy work is faithful and they will pay thee the hire of thy labor, and know that the giving of the reward of the righteous is for the time to come"[1]. R. Meir (ca.135 A.D.) expressed a similar opinion: "If thou hast labored at the Torah, there will be for Him (God) much reward to give thee". R. Jochanan B. Zaccai (d.ca.80 A.D.) said, "Salvation to you, Israelites! If they do the will of God, no people and no tongue has power over them; if, however, they do not do the will of God, he will give them into the

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1. Aboth 2:20

hand of a base people, and not only into the hand of a base people, but even into the power of the beasts of a base people"[1].

Back of this, however, there was a strong moral urge, and there were not wanting teachers who emphasized the disinterested motive. A saying of R. Zadok (1st cent.) was: "Make not of the Torah a crown wherewith to aggrandize thyself, nor a spade wherewith to dig. So also Hillel used to say, He who makes a worldly use of the crown of the Torah shall waste away. Hence thou mayest infer that whosoever derives a profit for himself from the words of the Torah is helping on his own destruction"[2]. Somewhat later, Raba (279-352 A.D.) emphasized repentance and good works as the goal of wisdom—"so that a man shall not read (Torah) and study (Mishnah) and then contradict his father or mother or teacher or anybody greater than he in knowledge and number (of years); as it is said, 'The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom, a good understanding have all they that do thereafter"[3]. 'All that learn' is not said here, but 'all that do thereafter', i.e. they that practise Torah for its own sake. As for him who does not fulfil the Torah for its own sake, it were better had he never been created"[4].

Moreover, to keep the Torah was felt to be no more than could be expected of a man. "If thou hast practised much Torah, take not credit to thyself, for thereunto wast thou created", said Jochanan b. Zaccai (d.ca.80 A.D.)[5]. Again, the study and practice of Torah was not so to preoccupy men that they would neglect their business, for business and the

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1. Kethub. 66b. Quoted in: Kommentar zum Neuen Testament aus Talmud und Midrasch, von Hermann L. Strack und Paul Billerbeck, München 1922-, Vol. I, p. 467. Future references and citations to this work will be given simply as "Strack-B".
2. Aboth 4:7. Quoted by Cohan, p.109 n.2 from Singer, p.196.
3. Ps. 111:10.
4. Cohen, p.111; Ber. fol. 17a.
5. Aboth 2:9.

practice of Torah were mutually interdependent. "R. Eleazar b. Azariah (b.ca.50,d. after 116 and before 135 A.D.) said: 'If there is no Torah, there is no worldly occupation; if there is no worldly occupation, there is no Torah...If there is no meal there is no Torah; if there is no Torah, there is no meal'"[1]. Such conceptions must be constantly kept in mind when passing judgment on the attitudes of rabbinical Judaism as shown in the use thus made of its sacred books.

(b) <u>The study of the Torah as a protection from suffering</u>. Not the least reward for the study of the Torah was the fact that suffering could thus be warded off or at least alleviated. When a man saw sufferings coming upon him he was to scrutinize his actions; if he could not find the cause there, he was to attribute them to neglect of the Torah in accordance with Psalm 94:12: "Happy is the man whom thou chastenest and teachest out of thy law", for everyone who was able to occupy himself with Torah and did not^do so was thought to be subject to dreadful sufferings. If there was again no justification, it was certain that his sufferings were due to the chastening of love[2]. R. Isaac (3-4 cent.) declared that whenever one read the Shema upon his bed, the evil spirits would flee from him[3]. A bad dream could be mullified by assembling three men who should recite with the man who had had it three verses in which the word "turn" occurred, three which contained the word "redeem", and three which had the word "peace"[4]. To each type of dream was assigned its appropriate Scripture verse of good omen, which had to be recited immediately upon arising in order to prevent

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1. Aboth 3:21
2. Prov. 3:12; Ber.fol. 5a, Cohen p. 20-21
3. Ber. fol. 5a, Cohen p. 19
4. These verses were respectively, Ps. 30:12, Jer. 31:12, Deut. 23:6; Ps. 55:19, Is. 35:10, I Sam. 14:45; and Is. 57:19, I Chron. 12:18 and I Sam. 25:6. Ber. fol. 55b, 3rd cent.; Cohen p. 360.

the corresponding verse of ill omen from coming into the mind first[1]. The Evil Eye could also be averted by appealing to genealogical connection with Joseph and reciting Genesis 49:22, changing the words, ʿālē ʿayin, 'by a fountain', to ʿolē ʿayin, 'overcoming the (Evil) Eye'[2]. The recitation of the Shema and of Psalms 3 and 91 was especially effective against the demons; the latter psalm was called "The Song against the Plague-Demons". On the other hand, to relax from words of Torah was to have no strength to stand in the day of trouble. One had to be prepared to suffer for Torah, because its words endured only with him who would submit to death on its behalf[3]. Indeed, the Torah itself had been given only through the medium of suffering: "Happy is the man whom thou chastenest, O Lord, and teachest him out of thy law"[4].

(c) The books of the Old Testament in Jewish education. History thus read in the light of discipline became both a warning and a promise for the future. It was therefore essential that the law be taught most carefully to each new generation. "He who profanes the holy things", said R. Eleazar the Modiite (50-135 A.D.), "and despises set feasts, and makes void the covenant of Abraham our father, and discloses meanings in the Torah which are not according to the Rule (Halachah), yea even if he have good works, he has no portion in the world to come"[5]. "More classroom, more wisdom", was one of Hillel's sayings[6], and R. Eleazar, one of the disciples of Jochanan b. Zaccai (d.A.D.80), said: "Be alert to learn Torah, what thou shalt answer to an Epicurean[7]" — a Jewish Epicurean was far more dangerous than the Gentile type.

The episode of the visit of Pappos b. Judah to R. Akiba shows the place and significance of education in the Jewish social order[8]. The

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1. Ber. fol. 56b. R. Joshua b. Levi, 3rd cent.; Cohen p.369
2. Ber. fol. 55 b, Cohen p.361.
3. Ber. fol.63b, Cohen p.422
4. Ps. 94:12; Ber.fol. 5a, Cohen p.22; saying of Sim.B. Lakish.
5. Aboth 3:16
6. Aboth 2:8
7. Aboth 2:18
8. Ber.fol.61b, Cohen p.406

Roman government had decreed that the Jews should no longer occupy themselves with Torah, but in spite of the prohibition R. Akiba was attracting great assemblies and studying Torah. When Pappos b. Judah asked him if he was not afraid of the wicked government, he replied in a parable in which he likened Rome to a fox who saw some fishes gathering together from one place to another. In reply to his question they said they were fleeing from the nets of men. Thereupon the fox invited them to come up and dwell with him on dryland; but they scornfully refused the invitation, giving as their reason: "If we are afraid in the place which is our life element, how much more so in a place which is our death element". "So also it is with us", ran the comment, "Now while we sit and study Torah in which it is written, For that is thy life and the length of thy days[1], we are in such a plight, how much more so if we go and neglect it?" And Akiba sealed his determination with his blood. Having been a stout supporter of Bar Cochba, he was executed by the Romans for teaching the law publicly contrary to the imperial edict of Hadrian. Even while they were combing his flesh with iron combs he was saying the Shema, and he died with the word ehad ("one") on his lips; then a Bath Kol issued forth and announced, "Happy art thou, R. Akiba, for thou art destined for life in the world to come".

As long as their children were in school the Jews felt that their enemies could not prevail. Jerusalem was said to have been destroyed because of neglect of the instruction of her children[2], and every town without a teacher was considered doomed. The only real poverty was lack of knowledge. "Great is knowledge, which is placed at the beginning of the benediction and said in the week-day", said R. Ammi. "Great is

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1. Deut. 30:20 2. Sab. 119b

knowledge, which is placed between the two references to the Divine Name; as it is said, 'For a God of knowledge is the Lord[1]". It is forbidden to have mercy upon one who does not possess knowledge; as it is said, 'For it is a people of no understanding, therefore he that made them will not have compassion on them[2]".

This was an extreme statement. The very insistence upon the social importance of learning sometimes led to the ostracism of the ignorant. No account was here taken of extenuating circumstances as was the case in other shortcomings. It was an aristocracy of learning--the only aristocracy the Jew would countenance. Hillel had said, "A rude man fears not sin; and no am-ha-aretz (vulgar person, one of the common herd) is pious". The am-ha-aretz labored under many disqualifications. R. Meir (2nd cent. A.D.) compared the marriage of one's daughter to an ignorant man to binding her hands and feet and throwing her into a den of lions[3]. The am-ha-aretz could not receive evidence in court, nor was his own evidence accepted; a secret must not be confided to him, and he could not serve as a guardian to orphans, nor as overseer of charity funds. One must not accompany him on a journey.

R. Jehuda, the redactor of the Mishna, was of the opinion that judgment comes into the world only on account of the am-ha-aretz[4]. Leaders who felt that knowledge would honor Israel in the sight of other nations[5] could never conceive it otherwise than that the indifference of these people to the law of their fathers marred the achievement of those who observed it strictly. The result, they felt, before the judgment of

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1. I Sam. 2:3
2. Is. 27:11; Ber.fol.33a, Cohen p.220
3. Pesachim 49b, 69a.
4. BB 8a, Strack-Billerbeck II, p.515
5. Sab. 75a; L. Goldschmidt, Der Babylonische Talmud mit Einschluss der vollstaendigen Mišnah. Leipzig 1906-9, 8 Vols., Vol. 1, p.492. Future references given as: "Goldschmidt".

God, was that instead of the reign of the Messiah, ever new sufferings were coming upon Israel. The common hatred against them, which however was not unrelieved by a milder attitude[1], is therefore easily understood. The "ignorant" cordially reciprocated the hostility. R. Akiba said, "When I myself was an am-ha-aretz, I used to say, Would that I had a Talmud scholar: I would bite him like an ass"; and R. Chijja (ca.200): "The hatred with which the am-ha-aretz hate the disciples of the learned is greater than the hatred with which the idolaters (non-Israelites) hate the Israelites, and their wives hate still more than they. In a Baraitha it was taught: If an am-ha-aretz has studied and then left off study again, he hates more than all of them". The wives and daughters of these people were called "abomination" and "cattle"[2].

Non-Israelites were also the objects of exclusiveness. The Torah was not to be taught to a Goi[3]. Moses wished to write down the Mishna as well as the books he actually did write; but he was forbidden to do this, lest when once the "peoples of the world" (Christian world) had translated them into Greek, they would claim to be the true Israel, while the real Israel would be regarded as the stranger[4]. This hostility between the educated class and the common people was a contributing cause of the popularity of early Christianity.

Such being the emphasis upon education in Judaism, the position of the teacher was accordingly high, and his qualifications had to correspond. Teaching was not only a privilege, but an obligation[5]; it was to be a disinterested service, and the great teachers of the Talmud did not and

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1. Strack-B, II, p.517
2. Pes. 49b Bar., Strack-B, II, p.519
3. Chag. 13a, Strack-B, I, p.447.
4. Tanch. B[illegible], 44b (date of saying 4th cent.) Strack-B,I, p.447
5. Aboth 4:6

would not receive pay. Such men devoted most of their time to teaching, and only enough to their work to make a living. Morally the teacher had to be a man of unblemished character, seeing that while the parents gave life to the body, he, the teacher, was the parent of the soul[1]. While he enjoyed academic freedom, he was required to teach the Torah exactly as it had been given him; but having been faithful in that, he was at liberty to state his own opinion.

Pupils were expected to reciprocate. The student had to be self-reliant[2], modest and yet not too bashful to ask questions. Perseverance[3] and modesty[4] were to be his characteristics, for the proud would cease to study. So far from being a handicap, poverty was almost an asset: from the children of the poor came often the authorities on law[5]. Handicaps of whatever nature were to be overcome by perseverance[6], and most important of all, the student's character was to be in keeping with his pretensions.

Education was first of all the father's duty, but when economic conditions made this impracticable schools were founded. Simon b. Shetach (126-76 B.C.) and Joshua b. Gamlah were active in establishing them. Every community was to provide a school,and if it had none, the children were to be sent to the nearest one unless a stream without a bridge separated them. To sleep in the schoolhouse was to exemplify Proverbs 23:21[7], whereas a single Mezuzah could save even a city that had been laid under the ban[8].

All forms of education were sacred. The Old Testament was the reader, speller,grammar, and the moral basis. Leviticus was the first book taught,

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1. BM 33a, Goldschmidt, Vol. 6, p.579.
2. Aboth 2:6.
3. San. 99a, Goldschmidt, Vol. 7, p.433-34.
4. Sot. 21b, Goldschmidt, Vol. 5, p.244.
5. Jewish Encyc., N. Y. 1901, 12 vols. (JE), Art. "Hillel", Vol. Vi, p. 397.
6. Taanith 8a, Goldschmidt, Vol. 3, p. 426-7.
7. Goldschmidt, Vol. 7, p. 301.
8. Goldschmidt, Vol. 7, p. 303; Deut. 13:17.

because it emphasized purity and holiness. A passage in Aboth[1] of uncertain date and attribution gives one view of the progress a pupil theoretically was supposed to make: "At five years old one is fit for the Scripture, at ten years for Mishnah, at thirteen for the commandments, at fifteen for Talmud". Since much of the Talmud existed only in oral tradition in the first centuries A.D., learning was given orally by teachers rather than from books, and the blessings of cooperative study were emphasized[2]. This very fact, however, told in favor of the growing reverence for the books of the Old Testament, for they were the validation and the final arbiter of the whole body of oral teaching. The necessary practice in memorizing and the emphasis upon a fixed time for study[3] also tended to increase the appreciation of the materials of study and reverence for the whole learning process. For a disciple of the wise to forget a word of his study was to incur guilt against his soul—a conception, however, which was modified near the close of the second century A.D. by R. Dosthai b. Jannai, who contended that it was only willful neglect to remember that incurred the censure of Scripture[4].

(d) The Old Testament and the Synagogue. As indicated above, study of the law was a social process. Private study did not enjoy the same esteem as that with a teacher. An am-ha-aretz was defined as one who, even although he had learned the Scripture and the Mishna from a teacher, had not studied in the schools of the learned. If one had studied Scripture but not Mishna, he was a bor--'uncultivated'; if he had learned neither, he was reckoned with the cattle[5]. The brothers of Rabbah, who wanted him to come to them in Palestine, wrote, "He who teaches himself is not like him who learns from a teacher"[6].

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1. Aboth 5:27
2. Shab. 63a, Goldschmidt, Vol. I, p.464-66
3. Aboth 1:15
4. Aboth 3:11
5. Strack-B, I, p.577ff.; II, p. 486: Sot. 22a Bar.
6. Strack-B, II,p.486: Keth. 111a; cf. Ber. 28b.

"Let thy house be a house of meeting for the wise, and bedust thyself with the dust of their feet, and drink with thirst their words", said Jose b. Joezer of Zeredah[1]. Hillel said, "Separate thyself not from the great congregation[2]". In later times R. Jochanan b. Nappaha (Palestinian Amora, 180-279 A.D.) feared God's anger at the absence of a quorum: "When the Holy One, blessed be he, enters a synagogue and does not find there ten, he is immediately filled with wrath; as it is said, 'Wherefore when I came, was there no man? When I called, was there none to answer?'[3]". The same rabbi attributed the long life of the old men in Babylon, in spite of their being outside of Palestine, to their being early and late in the synagogue[4]. Nor was mere attendance at the synagogue sufficient. To be given a scroll of the Torah from which to read and to decline would, in view of Deut. 30:20, shorten a man's life[5]. The seat of the scornful was defined by R. Hanina b. Teradion (d. 135 A.D.) as two persons sitting together without words of Torah, while on the contrary, when they were so occupied, the Shekinah rested between them[6]. Even laborers at their work were to read the Shema, and elaborate discussions were necessary dealing with the proper way of doing it under different circumstances[7].

Yet private reading was by no means to be neglected. A saying of R. Hannah b. Bizna (Babylonian Amora, 3/4 cent. A.D.) in the name of R. Simeon Hasida (2/3 cent. A.D.) answered the question how David knew it was midnight as follows: "There was a harp hanging above David's bed,

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1. Aboth 1:4
2. Aboth 2:5
3. Is. 50:2; Ber. fol. 6a, Cohen, p.30
4. Ber. fol. 8a, Cohen, p.44
5. A saying of Rab Judah b. Ezekiel, Babylonian Amoraim 220-299 A.D.
6. Aboth 3:3
7. Ber. fol. 16a, Cohen p. 103f.

and when the time of midnight arrived he used immediately to rise and occupy himself with Torah until the break of dawn[1]". Israel's hero king was thus thought of as an example. On the basis of Ps. 4:5, "Tremble and sin not; commune with your own heart upon your bed, and be still", R. Joshua b. Levi (Palestinian Amora, 3rd cent.) was of the opinion that "although a man has read the Shema in the Synagogue, it is a pious act to read it again upon his bed"[2]. Home reading of the same portion of Scripture as the synagogue reading was recommended[3].

(e) The Old Testament and the national festivals. The Torah was read not only at the synagogue services, but also on the various festival days. The following list taken from the Mishna[4] will illustrate this use of Scripture:

Festival	Scripture
Passover	Lev. 22:26ff
Ingathering	Deut. 16:9
New Year	Lev. 23:24
Atonement	Lev. 16
Tabernacles	Lev. 23:33ff. (on first day). Num. 29:1ff. (on remaining days).
Dedication	Num. 7
Purim	Ex. 17:8
New Moon	Num. 28:11
Days of Waiting[5]	Gen. 1
Fast Days	Lev. 26
Monday	Current section for the week
Thursday	Current section for the week
Afternoon prayer of the Sabbath	Current section for the week

The authority for the feasts themselves was Lev. 23:44, "And Moses declared unto the children of Israel the set feasts of Jahweh."

The mode of reading was definitely prescribed. According to R. Meir (2nd cent.) one must open the roll of the law, look into it, roll it together, say the blessing, and open it again and read; according to R. Jehuda the

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1. Ber. fol. 3b, Cohen p. 11
2. Ber. fol. 4b, Cohen p. 18
3. Ber. fol. 8a, Cohen p. 47, n. 8
4. Meg. IV v, vi; Goldschmidt, Vol. 3, p.664-665
5. Of the priests waiting to take their turn in the temple service.

procedure was simpler: to open the roll, look into it, say the blessing and read[1]. A more important requirement was that the interpreter might not help, lest the people think that the translation was in the roll of the law[2].

(f) The function of Old Testament books in prophecy. The national festivals reminded Israel of its glorious past and confirmed the hope of a still more glorious future. The books of Moses were not only the norm for conduct, education and worship; they were also by virtue of that fact the basis of the future hope of the nation. The exile had greatly enhanced the veneration for the prophets , whose books had won their position by being closely attached to the law. Moses had been the prophet. He had beheld truth as it were reflected by a clear mirror, all others as by a dull glass. R. Jehoschua b. Levi (ca. 250 A.D.) was of the opinion that Moses had spoken all the words of the prophets as well as his own, and everything which was prophesied later sprang out of his prophecy[3]. Forty-eight prophets and seven prophetesses had prophesied to the Israelites, and with the exception of Esther, they had neither added to nor taken away anything from that which stood written in the Torah[4]. One answer to the question how this was possible was the conception that the pre-existent souls of the prophets were present on Sinai when the law was given. Isaiah 48:16 was thus interpreted: "From the hour that the Torah was given I have received this prophecy; that is the meaning of the words, 'From the time that it was, there am I'; but only now has Jahweh Elohim sent me with his spirit, for up to this time I was not granted permission

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1. Meg. IV v, vi; Goldschmidt vol. 3, p. 669
2. According to ʿUla, 3/4 cent. A.D.
3. Ex. R. 42 (98d), Strack-B, II, p. 601
4. Meg. 14a, Bar., Strack-B, II, p. 601

to prophesy[1]". The same concept, it may be noted in passing, was applied to the "wise men": "And not only did the prophets receive their prophecy from Sinai, but also all the wise men; both those who were then living, and those who were to live in the future received their words there[1]". This was a guarantee of the agreement of the three divisions of the Old Testament. Only those prophecies valid for the future had been published; but God would at some time publish the others[2].

Prophecy was given through the "Holy Spirit". The Targums rendered "The Spirit of God", "The Spirit of Jahweh", or "The Holy Spirit" by "The Spirit of Prophecy"[3]. How the conception was woven into the entire fabric of the national life is well shown by a saying of R. Chunja (ca. 350 A.D.) in the name of R. Eleazar (ca. 270 A.D.): "If there are no children, there are no adults; if no adults, no scholars; if no scholars, no prophets; if no prophets, no Holy Spirit; if no Holy Spirit, no synagogues and school houses; and then, if one may say so, God will not permit his Shekina to dwell with Israel[4]". The prophets were thus the chief bearers of the Holy Spirit.

Originally the spirit of prophecy was also at work in the Gentile world. Before Abraham there were Adam, Noah, Japheth, Shem (equated by the rabbis with Melchizedek), and Eber; from Abraham to the giving of the Torah: Balaam and his father, Job, Eliphas, Bildad, Zophar, Elihu and Barachel. But from the moment when God concluded the covenant[5], the

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1. Tanch. ויחי 89a and Ex. R. 28 (88a), Strack-B, II, p.602; a saying of R. Jicchaq, ca. 300 A.D.
2. E. G. Hirsch in JE, Vol. X, 1905, p. 216, art. "Prophets and Prophecy", gives references: Cant. R.iv, 11; Meg. 14a; Eccl.R.I,9.
3. Strack-B, II, p. 127.
4. P San. 10, 28b, 51, Strack-B, II, p. 129.
5. Ex. 34:10.

spirit of prophecy among the nations ceased[1], the withdrawal being attributed to Balaam. The difference between the prophets of Israel and those of other nations was that the former warned Israel against transgressions and cherished feelings of pity toward them, and non-Israelites as well[2], while the latter (Balaam) was actuated by cruelty and led Israel into sin in order to destroy without a cause a whole nation. The section of scripture was written down, it was thought, for the express purpose of showing why God had allowed the Holy Spirit to disappear from the nations of the world[3].

In the beginning, the entire people of Israel were thought to have had the gift of prophecy. Not only did the patriarchs and matriarchs "see in the Holy Spirit", but all the pious and upright were by virtue of their prophetic endowment initiated into the mysteries of God; but from the time when they had worshipped the golden calf, prophecy was limited to those to whom God from time to time chose to make known his will—first of all to the prophets, but then also to men like David and Solomon, and finally to the ruling high priest who inquired of the Urim and Thummim. After the death of the last prophets, Haggai, Zechariah and Malachi, nothing remained but "minor Prophecy" and the Bath Qol.[4] "Minor Prophecy" may be described in the words of R. Jochanan b. Nappaha (Palestinian Amora, 180-279 A.D.): "If one wakes up and a verse comes into his mouth (spontaneously), it is to be regarded as a minor prophecy[5]".

The idea of the decline of prophecy among the Jews of the centuries immediately preceding and following the beginning of the Christian era presents a striking parallel to the fate of the Sibyl among the Greeks

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1. Seder ʿOlam R 21 end; Strack-B, II, p. 130.
2. Is. 16:11 and Ezek. 27:2.
3. Tanch פקודי 2 (231a); parallel passage Num.R.(188a); Strack-B, II, p.130.
4. Strack-B, II, p.128 and references.
5. Ber. fol. 55b, 57b, Cohen p.363.

and the Romans. To her in later times nothing was left but her voice. Similarly the Bath Qol was but the echo of the prophets. It might come from the depths of the earth[1], or from the ruins of a city[1], or from Mt. Horeb[2]; or it might simply "come forth". Its function was to comfort, to warn, to punish, to render decisions, to assure one who had just died of blessedness in the future world[3].

Only its reciprocal relationship with the sacred books of the Old Testament needs to be considered here. It was appealed to for decisions between rival schools of interpretation. According to a third century tradition[4] the schools of Hillel and Shammai had disputed for three years, each claiming the Halacha to be in line with its own interpretation. Finally the Bath Qol came forth: "These words as well as those are words of the living God, but the Halacha is in accord with the school of Hillel[5]". Such decisions,however, did not necessarily command final assent. R. Eliezer b. Hyrkanos (ca. 90 A.D.), for example, having thrice made a vain appeal to miraculous testimony to the correctness of his interpretation of the Halacha, finally called upon the Bath Qol, which also decided in his favor; but an opponent immediately quoted against it the words of Deut. 30:12, "It (the Torah) is not in heaven". The usual manner of decision was by majority vote[6].

Notwithstanding opposition on this score, the Bath Qol was a convenient explanation of certain otherwise puzzling questions. Thus it explained why Jonathan b. Uzziel who had published the Targum to the prophets had not

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1. San. 94a, Strack-B, I, 130; Ber. 3a Bar., Strack-B, I, p.129; date 150 A.D.
2. Aboth 6:2; R. Jehoschua b. Levi, ca.250 A.D.
3. For examples see Strack-B, I, 128-133.
4. R. Schemuel, d.354 A.D., Erub. 13b.
5. Strack-B, I, p.128.
6. Ber. 52a and Chullin 44a; Strack-B, I, p.127-8.

done the same for the Hagiographa[1]. Again, in the troublesome question as to the relative merit of the Song of Solomon as compared with Moses, it was made to utter the words of Deut. 34:10, "And there hath not arisen a prophet since in Israel like unto Moses[2]".

Curiously enough, the very Bath Qol, which was deemed by many to be only the feeble remnant of a once glorious order, was called upon to prove that men worthy of being prophets still existed, and that it was in reality the fault of the generation in which they were unfortunate enough to live that they did not take their place by the side of their glorious predecessors. This had been the lot of Hillel (20B.C.) and of Samuel the Small (100 A.D.)[3]. R. Gamliel II (ca. 90 A.D.) by the power of the Holy Spirit (prophetic endowment) knew the name of a Gentile whom he had never seen before[4]; R. Akiba (ca. 135 A.D.) "saw in the spirit" a message intended for one of his disciples and announced it[5]; and in like manner R. Meir (ca. 150 A.D.) knew that the husband of a woman who had remained in the synagogue too late one evening before the Sabbath to hear his (Meir's) public lecture had forbidden her to return[6]. R. Simon b. Jochai (ca. 150 A.D.) similarly had divined a plot to make him ridiculous[7]. To be sure these occasions of prophetic insight were somewhat trivial; Akiba himself lamented the fact that while men could through fasting induce the demonic spirit of prophecy, it was impossible on account of Israel's sin to do likewise with the holy spirit of prophecy[8]. Conversely, however, study of the law with a practical aim rendered a man worthy to receive the

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1. Meg. 3a, Strack-B, I, p. 128.
2. RH 21b, Strack-B, I, p.131; a saying of Rab (d. 247 A.D.).
3. T Sota 13, 3f. (318).
4. T Pes. 1, 27f. (157); Strack-B, I, p.528.
5. Lev. R 21 (120c); Strack-B, II, p. 133.
6. pSota 1, 16d, 37; Strack-B, I, p.216.
7. pSchevi'ith 9, 38d; Strack-B, II, p. 557.
8. San. 65b, Strack-B, II; p.133.

Holy Spirit[1], and public reading of the Torah was attended with like merit.[2] R. Nehemiah (ca. 150 A.D.) said: "He who takes a commandment upon himself is worthy to have the Holy Spirit rest upon him[3]". In ascending series, and leading one to the other were swiftness in fulfilling the commandment, bodily purity, Levitical purity, continence, holiness, humility, fear of sin, mystic contemplative piety, the Holy Spirit (of prophetic endowment), and the resurrection of the dead[4]; and the gift of prophecy was to be a special mark of the Messianic future[5].

That the wise men as well as the prophets were endowed with the Spirit of prophecy has already been remarked (p. 58 above). R. Abdimi of Haifa (ca. 280 A.D.) said, "From the day on which the Temple was destroyed prophecy has been taken from the prophets and has been given to the learned." "In that case, then, the learned man before that time was no prophet?"[6] "This is the way he meant it: although it was taken from the prophets, it has not been taken from the learned". It was even said that the wise man was more significant than the prophet[7]. The Holy Spirit was said to have rested on Solomon when he wrote Proverbs, Eccles?, and the Song which bears his name[8], and in the opinion of Simon b. Menasja (ca. 180 A.D.) the third of these made the hands unclean because it was inspired by the Holy Spirit[9]. Frequently the Holy Spirit, and not the mere Bath Qol, was personified and introduced as speaker with some such formula as "The Holy Spirit speaks", or "calls", or "announces". "This form is very commonly chosen where it is desired to complete, discuss or justify one passage of Scripture by means of another[10]". One example will suffice[11]: "Who uttered the Hallel

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1. R. Acha, ca. 350 A.D., Lv. R. 35 (132c); Strack-B, II, p. 134.
2. R. Judan, ca. 350 A.D. Midr., H. L. 1, 1(79b); Strack-B, II, p. 134.
3. Mekh. Ex. 15, 1 (40b); Strack-B, II, p. 135.
4. Sota 9, 15; R. Pinechus b. Jair (ca. 200) Strack-B, I, p. 194.
5. Midr. PS 14 § 6(57b); Strack-B, II, p. 134.
6. BB 12a; Strack-B, I, p. 670; Goldschmidt, Vol. 6, p. 967 translates: "Kann denn ein Weiser nicht auch Prophet sein!?"
7. Goldschmidt, Vol. 6, p. 967; a saying of Amemar based upon Ps. 90:12.
8. Midr. HL 1, 1(78b; 79a,b; 80a); Midr. Qoh.1, 1(4a); Strack-B,II,p.135.
9. T Jad. 2, 14 (683); Strack-B, II, p. 135.
10. Strack-B, II, p. 134.
11. A saying of R. Eliezer, ca. 90 A.D.; Strack-B, II, p. 136.

(Ps. 115)? Moses and the Israelites uttered it when they stood by the Red Sea. They said, 'Not unto us, Jahweh, not unto us', and the Holy Spirit answered, 'For my own sake, for my own sake, I will do it[1]'".

Belief in the Spirit of prophecy as the inspirer of the prophets and their writings, and of the wise men and their interpretations was quite common. It had been a universal endowment in the past, and would again be so in the future. For the present it was, of course, intermittent because of the contemporary degeneracy as compared with the Golden Age; but the fact must be emphasized that this was the result of a steadily increasing moral emphasis—itself an evidence that the prophetic spirit was not dead—which raised the qualifications for society at large as well as for the prophet who lived in it. With the general level of society thus raised, one had to be a truly great man in order to be credited with the prophetic endowment. The Spirit of prophecy was still active, but it was contingent upon obedience to God and his law. The basis of authority had merely receded from the immediate "Thus saith the Lord" to the written or oral authority of the past, but the consequence was that the function of the sacred books in prophecy became increasingly important.

Very great emphasis was laid on the interpretation of the Old Testament with respect to the Messianic age. The question as to the time to which a given prophecy applied was answered differently according to the manner in which the days of the Messiah were conceived. When, as in the case of the pre-Christian synagogue, they coincided with "the future world" so that they included the resurrection, the end of death and complete earthly glory, the theory obtained that the prophets prophesied only for the days of the Messiah[2]. On the other hand, when the Messianic regime

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1. Is. 48:11
2. Ber. 34b, Cohen, p.231; a saying of R. Hiyya b. Abba, 3/4 cent. A.D. in the name of R. Jochanan.

was thought of merely as ending the political subserviency of Israel, the complete fulfillment of the Old Testament prophecy was only expected in the future world. The Palestinian rabbis from the third century onward represent the transition between these two conceptions: they distinguished between the Days of the Messiah and the future world, but so idealized the former as to leave scarcely any difference between them[1].

With the hope of an ideal Messianic future through the reign of a son of the line of David the prophets had developed this concept of "the Day of the Lord". They, as well as their successors the rabbis were concerned with the future destiny of the nation. The latter felt that the longed-for "Day" could be hastened by faithful and disinterested study of the Torah[2]. Under Persian influence there was developed the conception of world epochs. The present world was to be followed by a sabbatical millenium, and great suffering would precede the time of the Messiah: "The footsteps of the Messiah are seen on the turning of the school house into a brothel, the desolation of Galilee and Gaulanitis, the going about of the scribes and saints as despised beggars, the insolence and lawlessness of the people, the disrespect of the younger generation toward the older, and the turning of the rulers to heresy[3]". The troubles of the house of Zerubbabel had caused the expectation of a Messiah from the line of David to be kept in the background, and as one after another of the heroes to whom the national hope had clung failed of complete and enduring realization thereof, the promised age was projected all the way over into the future world. Messiah's reign, therefore, did not mark the end of the world's history, and its duration varied. Moreover it was not always conceived of as

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1. Strack-B, I, p.602.
2. San. 99b, Strack-B, I, p.600; a saying of R. Levi, ca.200 A.D.; Cf. Is. 51:16.
3. Sotah IX, 15; Derek Erez Zuta X; San. 97b; Cant. R. II 13; Keth. 112b---quoted in JE, Vol. V, p.212, art. "Eschatology": "In these passages Amoraim of the 2nd and 3rd centuries are often credited with the views of the Tannaim of the First."

realizing the ideal. This is shown by the opinion of Samuel (Babylonian Amora, 175-254 A.D.): "There is no difference between this world and the days of the Messiah, except the servitude of the heathen kingdoms alone; as it is said, For the poor shall never cease out of the land[1]". As generally conceived, however, it was to be a time of peace[2], and the nations would bring tribute[3]. The Messiah would give to the nations the Noachian laws of humanity and make all men disciples of the Lord[4]. The phenomena of the career of Moses would be repeated, and, like Moses, the Messiah would die. A new Jerusalem was expected, and some thought that the Mosaic law would be fully observed in his time, although others looked forward to a new law which the Holy One would expound—a new covenant which would not be broken. After the Messiah's reign would follow the resurrection, in which Palestine would figure most prominently. It was "the land where the dead live again". Then after the Great Judgment the world would be regenerated and God would slay the Evil Impulse[5].

A much more intimate and personal function of the prophets was illustrated by the place which Elijah held in the popular mind. Not only was he to be the forerunner of the Messiah, but he was also conceived to be near to help individuals who were in need. He was known for his zeal for God and as a friend of the pious. Once Nahum of Gimzo (80-120 A.D.) on a political mission to Rome was robbed of the gifts he was carrying to the Emperor; Elijah restored them and procured for Nahum riches and honor[6]. He saved R. Meir from the persecuting bailiffs, and at the trial of Eleazar b. Prata he removed the hostile witnesses and took them four hundred miles away[7]. As physician he came to the help of Simon b. Ashi, who had swallowed a snake[8].

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1. Deut. 15:11
2. Ber. 34b; San. 91b.
3. Pes. 118b; Goldschmidt, Vol. II, p.739.
4. Midr. Teh. XXI, quoted in JE, art. "Eschatology".
5. Suk. 52a; Goldschmidt, Vol. III, p.146; see JE, Vol. V, p.209-18.
6. San. 109a. 7. Ab. Zarah 17b; Goldschmidt, Vol. VII, p. 855.
8. Sab. 109; Goldschmidt, Vol. I, p.580.

Elijah was also closely connected with the schools. A daily guest in the academy of Rabbi, he once disclosed a great mystery, for which, however, he was punished in heaven[1]. This is an illustration of the antipathy to "mysteries" which led the rabbis to reproach the "calculators of the Messianic ends"[2]. Eleazar b. Simon received instruction from Elijah for thirteen years, and Eliezer b. Hyrkanos was brought by him to Jerusalem to receive instruction from Jochanan b. Zaccai. He instructed Nehorai on Biblical passages, and explained to him some of the phenomena of nature[3]. Jochanan b. Zaccai (10-80 A.D.) and his opponents were informed by him what was the opinion in heaven regarding their controversy[4], and Rab Judah (Babylonian Amora, 3rd cent. A.D.) received instruction from him[5]. In the time of the Messiah he was to adjust all differences[6]. "It was expected that all controversies and legal disputes which had accumulated in the course of time would be adjusted by him, and that difficult ritual questions and passages of Scripture seemingly conflicting with each other would be explained, so that no difference of opinion would exist concerning anything[7]". He was to be the interpreter of the law forever, his relation to Moses being the same as Aaron's once was[7].

(g) The heavenly Academy and the future life. For those whose passion and delight was the Torah no happier future in heaven could be imagined than the cultivation of its study; if it was the way of life on earth, it was even more important in heaven where God himself studied it. Eternal life was bound up with it. R. Ishmael (d.ca. 135 A.D.) justified the custom of saying a benediction before and after studying the Torah by drawing a conclusion from the less to the greater: "If one is in duty

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1. BM 85b; Goldschmidt, Vol. 6, p.781.
2. San. 97b; Goldschmidt, Vol. 7, p.422ff.; San.99a, ib.p. 430 ff.; Ket. 111a, Goldschmidt, Vol. 4, p.828; Sab. 138b, Goldschmidt, Vol. I, p. 664.
3. See JE, Vol. V, art. "Elijah" where references are given.
4. BM 59b, Goldschmidt, Vol. 6, p.679.
5. Cohen, p. 196: Ber. 29b.
6. Eduy. VIII, 7; Goldschmidt, Vol. 7, p. 1147.
7. See JE, Vol. V, p.126 and references.

bound to say a blessing before and after eating that which supports the life of the fleeting moment, how much more does this hold true of the Torah, in which is the future world (eternal life)"[1]. Careful study of the law was a necessary element in man's preparation for the world to come. The answer of R. Eliezer (ca. 90 A.D.) to his disciples who had asked him to teach them how to be worthy of the life of the future world was: "Be careful of the honor of your colleagues; restrain your children from the mere reading of the Scriptures[2] and seat them between the knees of the disciples of the wise; and when you pray know before whom you stand; and on that account you will be worthy of the life of the world to come[3]". As the soul of the martyred Akiba left his body, the ministering angels in surprise were said to have asked the Holy One, "Such Torah, and such a reward?"; but a Bath Qol issued forth and announced, "Happy art thou, for thou art destined for the life of the world to come"[4].

To some of the rabbis that life was not one of mere inactivity. The beautiful conception of Rab (Babylonian Amora 154-247 A.D.) was that "the disciples of the wise have rest neither in this world nor in the world to come; as it is said, 'They go from strength to strength, every one of them appeareth before God in Zion[5]'". Indeed, inexhaustible mine as the Torah was to them, it was easy for them to conceive unlimited occupation with it. R. Eliezer b. Hyrkanos declared: "If every sea were ink and every reed a

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1. Mekh. Ex. 13, 3 (24a); Strack-B, II, p. 467.
2. Cohen (p. 187) translates "from recitation", i.e. parading a superficial knowledge of the Bible by mere memorizing; W. Bacher, Agada der Tannaiten, Vol. I (revised in 1903), Vol. II, 1890, refers it to the reading of apocryphal literature as against the canonical Scriptures (see Vol. I, p.97, n.5).
3. Ber. 28b, Cohen p. 187; Strack-B, II, p. 254.
4. Ber. 61b, Cohen p. 407.
5. Ps. 84:8; Ber. 64a, Cohen p. 425.

pen and all men scribes they could not write down what I have learned out of the Scripture and tradition, and what I have heard from the learned in the Academy; and yet I have taken from my teachers only so much as a man who dips his finger into the sea[1]". A similar saying was ascribed to Jochanan b. Zaccai[2].

Heaven had its academy as well as earth, and the rabbis who had gone thither took their places in a definite order[3]: R. Jose b. Chanina (ca. 270), R. Jochanan (d.279), R. Jannai (ca. 225), R. Chanina (ca. 225), R. Chijja (ca. 200). Carelessness in attending an earthly school might be punished by exclusion from the heavenly, but the merit of some friend of the offender might be sufficient to secure the admission of both of them[4]. According to a third century tradition, variously ascribed, "he who teaches the Torah to the son of another man is worthy to sit in the Academy in heaven[5]". There in the midst of them God himself would sit as teacher[6].

Like the apocryphal and the pseudepigraphical writers,the rabbis pictured heaven after the pattern of earth (it would have appeared to them that they were doing just the reverse). They, too, conceived of the Book of Life[7]. The book in which man's deeds were written made it possible for God to confront the wicked with all their sins in the face of their plea that he had been arbitrary in his decisions[8]. There was also the book in which the destiny of men was recorded. This conception was derived from Ps. 139:16 and 56:9, the "unformed substance" of the Psalmist being extended to include all the future generations with their preservers, leaders,

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1. Ab. R. N. 25: Strack-B, II, p. 587.
2. Tr. Sopherim 16:8; Strack-B, II, p. 587.
3. BM 85b; Strack-B, II, p. 267.
4. Ber. 18b, Cohen p. 122.
5. BM 85a; Strack-B, II, p.267.
6. Strack-B, I, p. 246.
7. Strack-B, II, p. 169-70; examples are Gn. R. 24 (16a), Bar Qappara ca. 220; and the Twelfth of the Eighteen Benedictions (pal. recension).
8. A saying of R. Jochanan (d. 279); Midr. Ps. 1 22 (12b); Strack-B, II, p. 171.

prophets, heroes, wicked and pious, king and scholar[1]. Similarly, Resch Laqisch (ca. 250) interpreted Gen. 5:1 to mean that "God showed Adam each generation with its representatives and learned men; when he came to the generation of Akiba (d. ca. 135) he (Adam) rejoiced over his (Akiba's) knowledge of the Torah, but was sad on account of his death[2]". By a natural expansion of this idea the Old Testament and the heavenly books became, for rabbinical Judaism as well as for the Jews immediately preceding and following the birth of Christ, respectively the earthly and heavenly editions of one and the same Torah. It was pre-existent in heaven, and as such it was the plan and the instrument of the creation and the preservation of the world.

(h) <u>The eternal Torah and Jewish apologetic</u>. The Torah was one of the seven things created before the world[3]. The period of its pre-existence was sometimes quite narrowly defined. According to R. Eliezer b. Jose Ha-gelili (ca. 150 A.D.) "nine hundred and seventy-four generations before the world was created the Torah was written and lay in the bosom of God and spoke with the serving angels a song Prov. 8:30[4]", while according to R. Simon b. Lakish (ca. 250 A.D.) the Torah had preceded the world for two thousand years[5]. When Moses, a man of flesh and blood, went up to receive the Torah—that jewel that had been guarded so carefully for 974 generations—the angels could do no more than quote reverently Psalm 8:5[6]. Nor was such a memorable event unobserved by the nations of the earth.

God's voice went out from one end of the world to the other, so

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1. Aboth R. N. 31; Strack-B, II, p. 173; a saying of R. Jehoschua b. Qarcha, ca. 250.
2. Strack-B, II, p. 173-4: San. 38b.
3. Gen. R. 8 (6a); Strack-B, II, p. 353; a saying of R. Chama b. Chanina ca. 260 A.D.
4. Prov. 8:30 Aboth R. N. 31 (8b); Strack-B, II, p. 354.
5. Gn. R. 8 (6a); Strack-B, II, p. 355.
6. Sab. 88b; Strack-B, II, p. 354.

that trembling seized all the peoples of the world in their palaces and they spoke the words of the song, Psalm 29:9; in consternation they consulted Balaam their prophet, who informed them that God had given his children a beautiful jewel which had been guarded in his treasurehouse 974 generations before the world was created. Thereupon they all raised their voices and said, "Jahweh bless his people with peace"[1]. Here was not only an expression of the eternal validity of the law in all past time, but a reflection of the appreciation of it among the Gentiles of the second century A.D. Reverence among the Jews and acceptability among the Gentiles were mutually interactive.

So great was the Torah that as early as the third century B.C. Simon the Just [2] had said, "On three things the world stands, on the Torah, and on the service, and on the doing of kindness". In accordance with Prov. 8:30 it was viewed as the architect and the plan and instrument of creation. The explanation of this passage was as follows: "When a king of flesh and blood builds a palace he builds it, according to the customary usage on earth, not according to his own design, but according to the plan of an architect, and the architect does not build it according to his thoughts, but he has for that purpose parchments and tablets which contain the plan of the building, in order to know in what manner the rooms and doors are to be placed. In the same way God looked into the Torah (as a plan) and thus he created the world[3]".

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1. Ps. 29:11; Zeb. 116a; Strack-B, II, p. 354; a saying of R. Elazar of Modiim (d. ca. 135).
2. Aboth 1:2. Simon the Just was high priest 310-291 B.C.; for a discussion of this date see H. Englander, art. "Men of the Great Synagogue" in Hebrew Union College Jubilee Volume, p. 145-169.
3. Gn. R. 1; Strack-B, II, p. 356.

Consequently past, present and future were bound up in the Torah. No earthly ruler could boast of a law so long observed inviolate. The Emperor Hadrian is said to have made the claim before R. Jehoschua that he was greater than Moses, by virtue of the fact that he was alive while Moses was dead. The rabbi challenged him to make an edict prohibiting the kindling of fire for three days. He did so, but on the very same evening they saw smoke rising in the distance. The Jew forthwith reminded the Emperor that Moses had long ago issued the same command, and that he had been obeyed. "How then", he demanded, "can you say, 'I am superior to him'?" This episode shows not only the confidence of the Jew in the enduring quality of his Torah, but also the value of the conception of an eternally valid law to the apologist and the polemicist[1]. In comparison with it kings even as great as Solomon were ephemeral creatures. When the book of Deuteronomy had ascended to make complaint against Solomon for changing the לֹא תַרְבֶּה "thou shalt not multiply" to אַרְבֶּה "I will multiply"[2], God had answered, "Solomon and a thousand like him will pass away, but not one of your words will pass away[3]". Such was the assurance that came from the possession of the Torah: with it the Jew could stand before kings.

Obviously, then, the thought that it remained to them was a consolation for the loss of their political independence. It was all they had left, and they prized it accordingly: "Beloved are Israel in that to them was given the precious instrument wherewith the world was created, as it is said, 'For a good doctrine I have given you; forsake not my

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1. Midr. Qoh. 8, 17 (41a); Strack-B, II. p. 487. R. Joshua (b. Chanania) was also engaged in polemic vs. the Christians; see art. "Joshua" in JE.
2. Deut. 17; 16f.
3. pSan. 2, 20c, Strack-B, I, p. 244.

Torah'"[1]. The study of Torah took the place of the Temple service[2], and on the authority of Deut. 28:10, God's Tefillin were thought to be a strength to Israel[3].

But the converse was strict obedience on the part of man, an obedience which man was capable of rendering. So convinced were the rabbis of this that they seriously spoke of men who had kept the whole of it from beginning to end. For example, R. Chanina b. Papa (ca. 300) said to his friend, the angel of Death, as his soul was about to enter into rest, "Bring me the book of the Torah and look to see whether there is anything written in it that I have not observed[4]", and R. Akiba (d. ca. 135) said, "All is foreseen, and free will is given, and the world is judged by goodness, and all is according to the amount of work[5]".

The sufferings of the nation had burned into the consciousness of the Jewish people the absolute necessity of doing the will of God. Constant study of the sacred books, together with the body of oral teaching and discussion accompanying them, was necessary. Worship in the synagogue was combined with the hearing of the law, and at the national festivals appropriate sections of it were read to the people. On account of the loss of political independence, prophecy, which had been so intimately associated with the great days of the nation, likewise suffered a decline, so that it was a mere echo of its former self; nevertheless there were still those who were worthy of the Holy Spirit of prophecy, and in the future era of the world's history prophecy would

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1. Aboth 3:19
2. Ber. fol. 8a, Cohen p. 46 and n. 4
3. Ber. fol. 6a, Cohen p. 29
4. Keth. 77b. Strack-B, I, p.816
5. Aboth 3:19

come into its own again. Meanwhile the utterances of the great prophets of the past functioned as a source of comfort and guidance in present troubles, and of hope for a better day in the future. The Torah was eternal, and one of the joys of the future life would be membership in the heavenly Academy, where God himself would be the teacher. The possession of such a treasure, created before the world itself, the plan and instrument of creation, the preserver of the present world, and the guarantee and chief delight of the future Age, gave the Rabbinical Jew his great apologetic, and enabled him to rise superior to the position of social inferiority in which he found himself.

CHAPTER IV

HELLENISTIC JUDAISM AND ITS SACRED BOOKS

I. The translation of the sacred books as a reflection of their function: Aristeas; Propaganda for the Jewish priesthood, law, philosophy and Bible.

The Hellenistic Jews derived the same values from the Old Testament books; but on account of their freer relations with the Graeco-Roman world, they had additional needs which were not so keenly felt by the Rabbinical Jews. They had to meet the full force of the social and philosophical objections to their religion, and, unlike their neo-Hebrew-Aramaic kinsmen, the logic of their position compelled them to put forth constant external as well as internal propaganda. Living in an age when social institutions and customs, religious beliefs and practices, and philosophical systems all alike were compelled to seek the authentication of the past, they found themselves competing with the Greeks and Romans, and consequently they had to lay claim to an even greater antiquity than their opponents. Their sacred books had, therefore, a peculiar value to them in giving them the recognition they sought among the Gentiles, and in setting their minds at ease for having taken over many of the good and useful things they found in Hellenistic life.

The Jews themselves felt that the good life consisted in the keeping of the law[1], but they were constantly having to do with Gentiles who demanded reasons for the faith and loyalty they required of them; and,

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1. Arist. 127

moreover, they had to make these reasons clear to themselves in order to guard against the danger of relaxation from their obedience. Practices demanded by the law of Moses, which were no longer possible of observance could be allegorized, and thus the static written code could still apply to the changed circumstances of life. More difficult, however, was such a question as that which was put by the writer of Aristeas (130-70 B.C.) into the mouth of the king of Egypt: "How is it that none of the historians or poets have ever thought it worth their while to allude to so wonderful an achievement?"[1] Here was a question that caused the writer considerable concern.

By way of answer he exploited the natural curiosity, mystery, and veneration attaching to books written in archaic letters and in an unknown tongue, and he magnified the actual and growing recognition and acceptance which the books of the Old Testament that had been translated into Greek were enjoying in his day into an official recognition on the part of the royal librarian at Alexandria and the king of Egypt himself. The law, he reminded the objectors, was sacred and of divine origin, and as such it was protected by miraculous power. To use an unreliable translation of it, even with a proper motive, was highly dangerous: of this the case of the historian Theopompus was sufficient warning, for he, being about to insert in his history incidents from one such defective translation, went insane for thirty days. The fate of Theodektes, the tragic poet, illustrated the peril attending any unworthy use of the Jewish Scriptures: he was punished for planning to adapt some of its incidents for one of his plays by being affected with a cataract in both of his eyes[2].

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1. Arist. 312

2. Arist. 312-316

The necessary safeguards thrown about the Old Testament to protect it from incompetent translations and from additions or omissions, together with the qualifications of translators requisite to render their work acceptable to the thorough-going Jew on the one hand, and to the Greek with his good literary taste on the other, reacted in favor of its authority[1]. The truth at the bottom of the statement that "the priests and the elders of the translators and the Jewish community and the leaders of the people" approved the translation and sanctioned these precautions was that the work was done in response to a popular demand, and the delight of the king is in reality an expression of the growing appreciation of the Old Testament on the part of the non-Jews. It is of significance that there was a sufficient non-Jewish demand for the sacred writings of Judaism to enable the writer of Aristeas to use it as an appeal for special favors from the government. He virtually challenges those who have been mistreating the Jews to show how they can consistently ask for the Jewish law, which belongs to the <u>whole</u> Jewish race, while at the same time they hold a <u>part</u> of them in slavery[2].

At the same time the author endeavored to make his sacred books still more acceptable to the Gentiles by using allegory to remove the necessity for observing that which was impracticable for them. His allegorical substitute was the essence of what he considered best in Greek philosophy, whether metaphysical, political or ethical. His ethics, however, which constituted a whole section of his book, was quite loosely connected with the Law; for having given his readers to understand that the translators had the endorsement of the High Priest in Jerusalem and that they were

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1. Arist. 310-311, 317; 121-123. 2. Arist. 15

proficient in Jewish literature and facile in the discussion of problems connected with the law[1], he deemed that this assurance was a sufficiently close connection with Scripture, and so he put into their mouths his ethical maxims without taking the trouble to refer them piecemeal to the written law, as the rabbis would have done. Herein lay a fundamental difference in method between the Hellenist and the Rabbi: one was content to attach the new to the old at a single initial point, while the other needed a whole series of reference contacts at each step of the way.

II. Sacred books and the maintenance of the national spirit: II and III Maccabees.

The Letter of Aristeas was in the main external propaganda, i.e. it was directed to the non-Jews. Internal propaganda was also necessary, and in response to this need II and III Maccabees were written. With reference to the two letters which preface the former Moffatt says[2], "Both epistles as they stand are specimens of the Alexandrian epistolography, which was fond of producing such documents for the purpose of edification". The aim of II Maccabees as a whole is to magnify the festivals of the Hanuka and Nicanor's Day[3], and these two letters purporting to come from the Jews of Jerusalem to those in Egypt represent the means adopted to keep the Dispersion true to the national spirit. It was an appeal to their patriotism, and as such it depended upon an unbroken line of connection with the great days of Moses. Jeremiah was supposed to have commanded the priests when they were about to be carried captive into Persia to hide in a cistern some of the fire

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1. Arist. 121-122
2. Charles, Vol. II, p.129
3. II Macc. 1:9; 2:18; 15:36

of the altar; at the same time he exhorted them not to allow the law to "depart from their heart" in the face of the idolatry amidst which they would have to live. This hidden fire was found in later years by Nehemiah, who rekindled the flame of the altar with it[1]. Similarly, the chasm of unrealized hopes from Nehemiah to the writer's own day was spanned by the legend of the hiding of the tabernacle and the ark and the altar of incense in a spot "unknown until God gather the people together again and mercy come[2]". Very significant in all of this was the role played by the sacred books. "These things were narrated also in the archives or memoirs of Nehemiah; as well as how he founded a library and collected the books about the kings and the prophets, and the books of David, and letters of kings about sacred gifts. Even so did Judas collect for us all the writings which had been scattered owing to the outbreak of war. They are still with us. So if you need them, send some messengers to fetch them for you[3]. The basis of Israel's future hope was God's promise in the law[4]. The fact that "letters of kings about sacred gifts[5]" were ranked along side of the sacred Scriptures in Nehemiah's library is an illustration of the growth of a sacred canon under stress of contemporary needs.

In times of persecution when life itself was in the balance, and when all that was most sacred was threatened with desecration, the Jew found an effective means of deliverance in "that prayer which expressed the law[6]"; and when civil rights could be obtained only at the price of submission to initiation into the mysteries[7], the memory of those heroic

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1. II Macc. 1:18-36; 2:1-3
2. II Macc. 2:4-12
3. II Macc. 2:13-15
4. II Macc. 2:18
5. Cf. Ez. 7:12f
6. III Macc. 2:21
7. III Macc. 2:30

days described in the sacred books was a potent factor in helping the majority to stand firm in the religion of their fathers.

Although III Maccabees belonged to Alexandria, it was bitterly hostile to all attempts at hellenizing. It vindicated its position by its firm belief in the speedy triumph of the Hasidim over their enemies—a belief based on the accounts of the deeds of the heroic defenders of that same strict Judaism, whose firmness had resulted in an immediate amelioration of their position. Similarly, II Maccabees, although more sensitive to the inadequacy of the hope of ultimate triumph for the nation as a motive for martyrdom, apart from that of personal immortality[1], likewise pictured to its readers immediate triumph such as that celebrated on Nicanor's day.

III. Sacred books in the solution of the problem of undeserved suffering and immortality: The Wisdom of Solomon.

The problem of rewards and punishments was by no means so simple for the circle represented by the writers of the Wisdom of Solomon (50-10 B.C.). This singularly exalted and beautiful book may be regarded as in part a polemic against Ecclesiastes and in part against the Sadducees. It was "Solomon" in refutation of "Solomon", and in competition with himself for a place in the collection of sacred writings: the Hebrew canon admitted the former only, while the Greek accepted both.

The Wisdom of Solomon represents a blending of Greek with Hebrew thought. It contains both haggadah and allegory. The former according to Holmes "is equal to anything in the Rabbis, the allegory is of a milder type...The allegorical traits in the book are not nearly so strong

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1. II Macc. 7

as the haggadic, but though the latter is generally associated with the methods of the Rabbis, both flourished vigorously amongst the Hellenistic Jews[1]".

Undeserved suffering was the problem with which the writer was wrestling. His answer was: This world is not all. Moreover, in spite of their apparent prosperity in this world, the wicked have never really lived at all. The answer represented its author's demand on life. That demand was the essential thing, so that, acting even apart from Greek influence, it might have been sufficient to drive him to his conviction; as it was, Greek philosophy stimulated him and prepared the way. This conviction, once arrived at, solved for him the problem of life; but then it was further strengthened and vindicated by an appeal to the past as recorded in the sacred books of the Jews. He saw there the wisdom of God, impersonal, yet personified[2], present at creation[3], the moving spirit of history[4], and the giver of immortality[5]. Wisdom passing into holy souls made them friends of God and prophets[6]. The word of the Lord, all powerful, leaped down from his throne in heaven to the protection of his people[7]. Marvellous as was the provision made for physical life, it was not the fruits of the earth that nourished man, but God's word which preserved those who trusted him[8]. Conversely idolaters would be punished; the author's polemic against them was based on Isaiah 40, 41, 44 and 46[9].

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1. Charles Vol. I, p. 533, quoting Schürer, Gesch. d. Jüd. Volk., II, 1, p. 341.
2. Charles I, p. 528.
3. Wis. 9:9.
4. Wis. 10ff.
5. Wis. 8:13.
6. Wis. 7:27.
7. Wis. 18:15; cf. 16:26.
8. Wis. 16:26.
9. Wis. 13:11ff.

IV. The sacred book as an aid to an understanding of the universe:

II Enoch.

The writers of the Book of Wisdom had been content with the fact of Wisdom's work in the creation and the preservation of the world and its gift of immortality to men. Now by an easy development another interest emerged, viz. that of learning the secrets of the universe. The simple assurance that the righteous would live forever was not sufficient: the more intimate details of that life must be investigated. But who could vouch for the reliability of the results obtained, seeing that these matters were beyond the reach of common experience? The device adopted was the celestial journey of Enoch and the account thereof written by that worthy himself in no less than 365 books[1]. In the tenth heaven in the very presence of the Lord he wrote things unknown even to angels. Of what he wrote at God's command he thus informs us: "And he (the archangel Pravuil who dictated) was telling me all the works of heaven, earth and sea, and all the elements, their passages and goings, and the thunderings of the thunders, the sun and the moon, the goings and changes of the stars, the seasons, years, days and hours, the risings of the wind, the numbers of the angels, and the formation of their songs, and all human things, the tongue of every human song and life, the commandments, instructions, and sweet-voiced singings, and all the things that it is fitting to learn...all the souls of mankind, however many of them are born, and the places prepared for them to eternity; for all souls are prepared to eternity, before the formation of the world[2]".

Such books, the writer warned, must not be neglected, but must be handed from father to son. "And now, my children, lay thought on your

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1. II En. 23:6, "A", Charles II, p.444.
2. II En. 23:1-5, "A", Charles II, p. 443-444.

hearts, mark well the words of your father, which are all come to you from the Lord's lips. Take these books of your father's handwriting and read them. For the books are many, and in them you will learn all the Lord's works, all that has been from the beginning of creation, and will be to the end of time. And if you will observe my handwriting, you will not sin against the Lord[1]". To this end Enoch's sons were to hand down the books which he had given them for an inheritance of peace to all who wanted them, that they might see the Lord's very great and marvellous works[2]. They were further warned that every man's work had been put into writing, and that none born on earth could remain concealed.

In patience and meekness, therefore, they were to spend their days so as to inherit endless life, and for the sake of the Lord they were to endure every wound, every injury, every evil word and attack. Evil must not be returned for evil, but vengeance must be left to the Lord. He who spent money for his brother's sake would receive ample treasure in the world to come[3]. Attendance at worship was recommended: "It is good to go morning, midday and evening into the Lord's dwelling for the glory of your creator[4]". In a series of blessings and curses instruction was given as to how to praise God's name. At the conclusion of these was the reminder that all these things would be "laid bare in the weighing-scales and in the books on the day of the great judgment". To those who were not found wanting came the comforting assurance of a happy future: "And now, my children, keep your hearts from every injustice which the Lord hates;

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1. II En. 47:1-3, "A", Charles II, p.459.
2. II En. 54, "A", Chas.
3. II En. 50, "A", Charles II, p.460.
4. II En. "A", 51:4, Charles II, p. 461.

just as a man asks (something) for his own soul from God, so let him do to every living soul, because I know all things, how in the great time (to come) are many mansions prepared for men, good for the good, and bad for the bad, without number many[1]".

Here is revealed a threefold function of sacred books: in satisfying men's curiosity regarding the heavenly world; in giving courage to endure the troubles of life; and in motivating morality by assurance of immortality. As compared with the Wisdom of Solomon it is a practical interest: the basic philosophical tendency of the latter found its expression elsewhere.

V. The sacred book as a factor in self-control: IV Maccabees.

The impact of Hellenism upon the Jews had driven many of them to the conviction that there was much in Greek philosophy to support them in the observance of the law of Moses. On the other hand, this philosophy, attractive as it was, could not be taken over without deriving the warrant for such procedure from the law itself. The center of this reciprocal movement was the synagogue, and IV Maccabees as a treatise on the problem of the relations between the two was at least suitable for, if not actually delivered to such an audience.

Its author (in the period 63 B.C.-38 A.D.) was thoroughly convinced of the Stoic principle of self-control, and he upheld the Stoic virtues, minus of course their ideal of apatheia. But could the reason actually exert control over the passions, and if so on what driving force was it to rely? The answer lay in the sacred books of his fathers, and he put it into the mouth of Eleazar as he addressed the tyrant: "We, O Antiochus, having accepted the divine law as the law of our country, do

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1. II En. 61:1, "A", Charles II, p. 465-6.

not believe any stronger necessity is laid upon us than that of obedience to the law[1]". The nexus which he made between the Jewish law and Greek philosophy can be set forth best in his own words: "Reason I take to be the mind preferring with clear deliberation the life of wisdom. Wisdom I take to be the knowledge of things divine and human, and of their causes. This I take to be the culture acquired under the law through which we learn with due reverence the things of God, and for our worldly profit the things of man[2]". When God created man he implanted in him his passions and inclinations; but at the same time he set man's mind on the throne, and to the mind he gave "the law by which if a man order himself, he shall reign over a kingdom that is temperate and just and virtuous and brave"[3]. The law taught self-control, justice and righteousness[4], and in this it was vindicated by the martyrs whose lives it recorded in the past and by those who had suffered more recently in the Maccabaean period.

The martyr priest Eleazar was at once confessor of the law and philosopher of the Divine life[5]. The fathers had enjoyed great peace through the observance of the law[6], and their children were exhorted to a like obedience in recognition of the fact that the Inspired Reason is lord over the passions[7]. As for the seven young martyrs and their mother, they had received pure and immortal souls from God[8]; by their steadfastness they had triumphed, and by the examples of the heroes whose lives they found recorded in the sacred books they had been made strong to overcome; for had their father not taught them the Law and the Prophets? Had he not read to them of Abel, Isaac and Joseph, and of Phinehas? Had

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1. IV Macc. 5:16
2. IV Macc. 1:15-17
3. IV Macc. 2:23
4. IV Macc. 5:23-24
5. IV Macc. 7:7
6. IV Macc. 3:20; 18:4
7. IV Macc. 18:2
8. IV Macc. 18:23

he not taught them the song of Ananias, Azarias and Mishael and glorified Daniel in the den of lions? And finally had he not reminded them of promises from David and Solomon, and from Isaiah, Ezekiel and Moses?

VI. Sacred books as the basis of certainty in the fusion of philosophical and ethical systems: Philo.

The tense racial prejudice against the Jews on the part of the populace of Alexandria at the beginning of the Christian era made vigilance especially necessary if they were to hold firmly to their religion. This accounts for the strenuous insistence of IV Maccabees on the Inspired Reason and the culture acquired under the Law; yet important as this function of the sacred books was, the educated Jew of that city found still another value in them, viz. the philosophical. Alexandria was a whirlpool of conflicting philosophies and ethical ideals and practices which were mutually forced to take account of each other and to recognize alike each other's strong and weak points. The net result was that to many men none of them appeared sufficiently worthy of confidence, and when the suspense of scepticism became unbearable, the only refuge was eclecticism. Among those who sought shelter therein was Philo.

It was serious enough for the philosophers to quarrel with each other about such questions as whether the universe was created or uncreated, destructible or indestructible, and concerning the essences, distinctive qualities, and changes of sun and moon and earth and air and water[1]; but Philo found them equally at variance in matters of

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1. Quis rer. div. sit 50 ; trans. Yonge I, p.143.

justice and wisdom, of honor and expediency: "For whatever this man desires as such, someone else who from his childhood has learnt a contrary lesson, will be sure to deny[1]". In the consideration of what was good men were compelled to suspend judgment rather than to agree in spite of an "unspeakable number" of discussions (l.c.). The untrained multitude, of course, accepted uncritically every tradition presented to it; but the educated Jewish philosopher—what was he to do?

Philo put his answer into the mouth of Moses: "For whatever advantages are derived from the most approved philosophy to its students, full as great are derived by the Jews from their laws and customs, inasmuch as through them they have rejected all errors about Gods who have been created themselves; for there is no created being who is truly God[2]". Moses as the lawgiver of the Jews, or even as some thought only as interpreter, was the greatest and most perfect man that ever lived, and in spite of the fact that the Greek historians had not thought it worth their while to mention him, the glory of his laws had penetrated "to the very farthest limits of the universe"[3]. Here was Philo's touchstone wherewith to test competing philosophies, and he proceeded to apply it. Then, whenever he found them good, he further authenticated them by reading them first into, and then out of the Old Testament by means of allegory. All the while, however, he insisted that one must neither add to nor take anything away from the law; otherwise there might be an addition of what is unjust. "For", he said, "there is nothing which has been omitted by the wise lawgiver which can enable a man to partake of entire and perfect justice[4]". The voice which gave the law spoke so clearly and distinctly

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1. Ebriet. 48; Yonge I, p.494-5
2. Hum. 2; Yonge III, p. 426
3. Vit. Mos. I, 1; Yonge III, p.1
4. De Just. Yonge III, p. 390

that the people actually saw it instead of hearing it, and it was altogether appropriate that God's voice was said to have come forth out of the fire, for his oracles were accurately understood and tested like gold by the fire[1].

Moses the Lawgiver was "the prophet Logos", "the purest mind", inspired with both legislative and prophetic functions[2]. Now since God was the fountain of the Logos, and since law was nothing else but the word of God, enjoining what was right and forbidding what was not right so that the wise man's acts were coincident with the divine commands[3], the conception of the direction of the Logos would mean to obey the command of the Scriptures. "To Philo", says Drummond, "the philosophical idea of the Logos and the religious conception of the Scriptures would easily, and, indeed inevitably, pass into one another. The Pentateuch was simply the divine Logos resolved into Logoi, statements of philosophical truth, and precepts of the moral code[4]".

Having thus grounded his own philosophy, religion and ethics on the divine word, Philo was able to take the offensive against false systems. He observed that it was not usual for states to honor each other's laws, and yet the Jewish law was becoming universal, especially among those who made most of virtue. This gave him confidence, the more so because the Jewish law had come through all vicissitudes intact, while the laws of other states had been "put in motion" by wars, tyrannies, insurrections and revolutions[5].

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1. De Decal. 11; Yonge III, p. 146-147
2. Congr. erud. gr., 30; Yonge II, p. 184.
3. Migr. Abr. 23; Yonge II, p. 72
4. James Drummond, Philo Judaeus, 2 vols., London 1888, Vol. II, p.307
5. Vit. Mos. II, 3-7; Yonge III, p. 77-83.

Moreover, the lawgiver in his sacred code had maintained no ordinances respecting initiations and mysteries and all such trickery and buffoonery, and he could challenge those who belonged to the mysteries to come out into the open—into the market places: "there let them do good to the assembled multitudes by means of the principal of the outward senses, giving them to see those things the sight of which is the most delightful and most impressive, and hearing and feasting upon salutary speeches which are accustomed to delight the minds even of those men who are not entirely illiterate[1]".

In comparison with all this, the system of Moses was the true mystery, which the initiated and the purified were to guard jealously from the uninitiated. They were not to be satisfied with knowledge already attained, but were to attach themselves to others who had been initiated so as to learn more. Philo, who had himself been initiated into these great mysteries by Moses the friend of God, had nevertheless not hesitated to become the pupil of Jeremiah when he had learned that that prophet was not only initiated into the sacred mysteries, but was also a competent hierophant[2], who had, like a man very much under the influence of inspiration uttered an oracle in the name of God[3].

Inspiration extended even to the translators of the LXX: they too were hierophants, and the version they had made was the sister, or rather one and the same with the Hebrew. They were not mere interpreters, but prophets, men who because of their honest and guileless minds had been permitted to go along with the most pure spirit of Moses, and so their

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1. De sacr. 12; Yonge III, p.243
2. ἱεροφάντης ἱκανός.
3. Jer. 3:4; Cherub. 14; Yonge I, p. 187

work was altogether trustworthy for those who were initiated into the mysteries of the law[1].

On the basis of such an excellent law Philo could even challenge the civil government to be mindful of its duty. On the very first day of his office a magistrate was to obey Deut. 17:18, for to write the laws with his own hand would so stamp them on his mind that he would never forget them. Then as he read them over day by day he would think, "I wrote all this; I who am a ruler of such great power, without employing any one else as my scribe, though I had innumerable servants...that I might stamp upon my intellect the divine and indelible characters...My scepre shall be the book of the copy of the law...the signal of my irreproachable sovereignty, created after the image and archetypal royal power of God[2]".

In every phase of life communion between God and man was to be sought, and here Philo pointed to the good men in the Scriptures who had the gift of prophecy. He considered himself inspired at times with a "more solemn word"[3], and whereas sometimes when he wished to write he found his mind fruitless and barren, at other times by a divine possession he was filled with enthusiasm, and, absolutely ignorant of the place, of those present, of himself, of what was said, of what was written, he had "a stream of interpretation, an enjoyment of light, a most keensighted vision, a most distinct view of the subjects treated such as would be given through the eyes from the clearest exhibition of an object[4]". "But", says Drummond, "he ascribed to the biblical writers a

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1. Vit. Mos. II, 3-7; Yonge III, p. 77-83.
2. De creat. prin. 4; Yonge III, p. 394.
3. Quis rer. div. her. 52.
4. Trans. by Drummond, Vol. I, p. 15: Migrat. Abr.

fullness of this divine enthusiasm, and consequent infallibility of utterance, which he claimed for no others". For Philo the sacred books fulfilled their highest function in bringing men through their writers into communion with God.

Communion with God was not merely a matter for the individual. Consequently the words of Scripture were holy to Philo, not only because philosophical teachings were revealed in them, but also because he considered them as the bond which united the people of Israel[1]. He allegorized, not because he gave no recognition or justification to the laws as such, but because he wanted to find in the Scriptures everything that appealed to him in the writings of the Greek poets and thinkers[2]. He felt himself indebted to the traditions handed down from his forefathers. Besides studying the writings of Moses, marvelous memorials of his wisdom as they were, he had heard many things from the elders of his nation, and he felt himself acquainted with the history of the Lawgiver's life more accurately than other people[3]. The writings of Moses had been discussed and interpreted of old by men of divine spirit, and that, too, in no superficial or careless manner[4]. There was no particular merit in obeying the written laws when one was influenced by compulsion and the fear of punishment; on the other hand, to abide by the unwritten laws was worthy of praise because it exhibited a spontaneous and unconstrained virtue[5]. These oral laws were therefore not to be despised simply because they had been handed down without being written.

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1. Bernhard Ritter: Philo und die Halacha, Halle 1879, p. 11.
2. Ritter, l. c., p. 12.
3. Vit. Mos. I; Yonge III, p. 2.
4. De circum. 2; Yonge III, p. 176.
5. De just. 3; Yonge III, p. 361.

It is, therefore, not surprising that while the Philosophical views of Philo stand for the most part in close connection with Greek philosophy, there are on the other hand connections in his writings with Palestinian exegesis, with the Midrash and Talmudic writings. His manner of asking questions reminds one of the Haggada, to which he is naturally much closer than to the Halachah[1]. Nevertheless he sometimes adheres more closely to the letter of a command than the Halachah itself. "It is characteristic", says Ritter, "that Philo is far more exact in regard to holding fast to the letter of the law than the Palestinian halachists". In support of this statement he adduces Jerusalem Talmud Kethuboth 22c, where R. Ishmael interpreted the words "Upon his staff" in Ex. 21:19 to mean "in his strength"; the words "if the sun be risen" of Ex. 22:3 to mean "when the sun was bright enough so that no danger was imminent"; and the words "they shall spread the garment" to mean "they shall spread out clearness concerning the matter". On the other hand, according to Ritter, it is certain that Philo interpreted the first two literally, and as for the third, the contrary is at least not proven[2]. Similarly, Philo took the lex talionis literally in contrast to the Palestinian Halachah, which was milder (ib., l.c.). His most important deviations from the Palestinian tradition, which are not to be conceived of as his subjective explanations, but as the collective work of the Alexandrians, may be explained by the different circumstances of the Egyptian Jews[3]. The foregoing considerations are of importance because they illustrate the

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1. L. Cohn: Die Werke Philos von Alexandria, Breslau 1909, Einl. p.18; cf. also Carl Siegfried: Philo von Alexandria als Ausleger des alten Testaments, Jena 1875, p. 145-147.
2. Ritter: Philo und die Halacha, pp. 13-14.
3. Ritter, ib. p. 15-17.

process of fusion between "Jewish" and "Greek". They show how Philo, although interested in and responsive to Greek culture was yet loyal to his race.

VII. The function of sacred books in the competition of nations for the prestige of antiquity: Josephus.

While Philo was primarily interested in the philosophical aspects of Hellenistic life in that he sought for a satisfying view of the world and then, having found it, grounded it in the Scriptures of his race, Josephus devoted himself to the history of his people with a view primarily of injecting into that world an antitoxin against the false propaganda which was a constant source of terror and social disability to them. As he saw it, his task was to match the Greek boast of a great antiquity with an antiquity greater still, and thus to convict the malicious, correct the ignorant, and instruct those who were sincere seekers after truth[1].

Face to face with the charge that the Jewish nation was of late date because it was barely mentioned by the Greek historians, he countered with what he regarded as proof that the boasted antiquity of the Greeks was not so great as was generally alleged, while on the other hand, his own nation, historians to the contrary notwithstanding, had had a history more ancient than they. To begin with: the writing of history was the very last thing the Greeks had set about—a fact which was in striking contrast to the Egyptians, Chaldeans and Phoenicians, among whom history was esteemed sacred, and was written in public tablets by their wisest men. Moreover, history among the Greeks was continually being blotted

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1. Contra Ap. I, 1.

out by wars and civil disturbances, and fresh beginnings were ever in order. Even writing began late. Report had it that Homer himself had not left his poems in writing, and the first historians had lived but a little while before the Persian war. Their histories were full of conjectures and contradictions, whereas true history required agreement; and worse still, they were more concerned to demonstrate their ability to write well than to write the truth[1].

Very different was the state of Jewish history. High priests and prophets all the way down to Josephus' own times had written with the utmost accuracy, and, what was more, Jewish history would continue to be so written. The character of the priestly historians was in turn guaranteed by the care exercised in the preservation of their genealogical tables, which assured them of the purity of their line. The result of not permitting promiscuous writing of history was that there was no disagreement in what was written; what was written was learned by God himself. Instead of a multitude of contradictory books, the Jews had but twenty-two, containing the records of all past time, and these were justly believed to be divine. They had suffered neither addition nor subtraction, nor even any change. It came natural to all Jews to esteem them divine from their birth, to hold them through life, and, if need be to suffer violent death in defense of them. Where was the Greek who would die, even in case all the writings among them were destroyed?[2]

As to antiquity, Josephus ventured the claim that Moses was the most ancient of all the legislators of whom he had anywhere heard; in comparison with him, Lycurgus, Solon, and all the rest of them were but of yesterday: the very term "law" was unknown to Homer. The political government of the

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1. C. Ap. I, 2-5.

2. C. Ap. I, 6-8.

Jews had endured more than 2000 years; nor had all the changes of fortune that had come over the Jews caused them to betray or neglect their laws— a striking contrast to the Lacedemonians, who, in prosperity did indeed observe their laws, but in adversity forgot almost all of them[1].

The real test would be a comparison of the laws themselves; for Moses was no imposter, but was worthy to be compared with such legislators as Minos was alleged to be, and whereas some of the Greeks, either sincerely or merely for the purpose of persuading the people, referred their laws to Jupiter or attributed them to Apollo and his oracle at Delphi, the Jewish legislator, with no regard to any of these variant forms of government, had ordained a theocracy by ascribing the authority and power to God and persuading the people to regard him as the author of all good things and to pray to him in difficulty. Such a God it was impossible to escape, either in outward actions or inward thoughts. He was unbegotten, forever immutable, and superior to all mortal conceptions; he was known to man by his power, yet unknown as to his essence. To be sure this conception of God was not unknown to the wisest of the Greeks such as Pythagoras, Anaxagoras and Plato; but on account of the prejudiced opinions of their people these men did not care to disclose their true notions. Not so with Moses: the distinguishing feature of his laws was that he had not made religion a part of virtue as they had done, but on the contrary he had ordained justice, fortitude, temperance and harmony among the members of the community to be parts of religion; and, most important of all, having himself vindicated his laws by his own deeds, he had made the study and the practice of them one and inseparable. The minutest affairs of daily life were regulated so that Jews might not be

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1. C. Ap. II, 12.

guilty of sin, either voluntary or in ignorance. To this end Moses had permitted the people to leave their other employments once each week in order to assemble to hear the law and learn it exactly. The result was that the Jews could claim the unique distinction that the people themselves were quite familiar with their laws. Transgressions were both few and sure of punishment. Their chief care was to educate their children well, and their most necessary business in life was to observe the laws and rules of piety that had been given to them[1].

With this apology Josephus supplemented and corrected the rather scant references to his people on the part of the Greek historians, and refuted the slanders they contained. What lent force to his argument was the increasing interest in and acceptance of the Jewish Scriptures on the part of the Greeks themselves. Josephus could appeal to Ptolemy Philadelphus, who had had the sacred books translated into Greek: he certainly would not have been so desirous of learning the Jewish law and national philosophy, had he not held the men who used it in great admiration[2]. Furthermore there was a longstanding inclination among the multitude of mankind itself to follow Jewish religious observances, so that Josephus could say that just as God himself pervaded the world, so the Jewish law had passed through all the world[3]. Nowhere could a city be found where the Jewish Sabbath, fast days and many of their prohibitions as to food were not observed. More important still, other nations endeavored to imitate the concord of the Jews with one another, their charity, their diligence in their trades, and their fortitude in distress[4]. This, Josephus felt, was a sufficient answer to Apion's lie that the Jews

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1. C. Ap. II, 4.
2. C. Ap. II, 40.
3. C. Ap. II, 40.
4. C. Ap. II, 12.

had taken a solemn oath to bear no good will to any foreigner, and particularly to none of the Greeks[1]. The law of Moses was self-vindicating, and as such was exceedingly useful to Josephus in refuting the slanders of writers like Manetho and Lysimachus. The former had claimed the Egyptian sacred writings as a source of his history; the Jewish historian could, of course, not claim a greater antiquity for his own sacred records, but he could appeal to their character as giving the lie to the anti-Semite.

One of the slanders against the Jews was that they had been driven out of Egypt as lepers. Manetho had based the command of king Amenophis to clear Egypt of them and other impure people on a prophecy given in response to the king's dream by another man named Amenophis, who seemed to partake of a divine nature both as to wisdom and knowledge of the future. The version of the story given by Lysimachus omitted the dream and the prophet and sent the king to (Jupiter) Amon to obtain oracles about the scabby and leprous people who afterwards had become robbers of temples[2]. Josephus simply pointed to the Ten Commandments. The Jewish conception of God demanded constant reverence, worship, and purity instead of intermittent mysteries and sacred ceremonies as among other peoples. At the sacrifices, it demanded fellowship and prayer for the common welfare, and sobriety and order, so that the people might be ready for their other occupations. At the feast of Tabernacles the high priest was to stand upon a high pulpit so that he might be heard while he read the laws to all the people. Sexual purity and the sanctity of marriage; education of the children in the laws so that they might imitate the good men of the past (in contrast to the drinking festivals celebrating the birth of children among other nations); honor toward parents; honesty

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1. C. Ap. II, 12.
2. C. Ap. I, 26. 35.

and fairness in business; willingness to admit foreigners into their fellowship and to assist all men who were in need of such things as water, food, fire, direction as to the roads or burial; moderation towards enemies and kindness to animals--these were the ideals and practices enjoined by the law of Moses; and the reward of obedience to them was not silver and gold and public applause, but the witness of a good conscience, and, by virtue of the assurance resulting from the legislator's prophetic spirit, faith in a future life to those who observed those laws, even though they were obliged to die for them[1].

The earliest Greek philosophers, although in appearance they observed the law of their own countries, had in reality merely followed Moses, both in their actions and in their philosophic doctrines[2]. Nor was Moses the only Jew who deserved to rank with the philosophers. There was Solomon, who in wisdom had exceeded the ancients,and who was in no way inferior to the Egyptians. Books of Odes, and Songs, a thousand and five, and three thousand parables and similitudes in natural science were to his credit; but above all, God had enabled him to learn how to expel demons, and he had composed incantations and directions for using exorcisms to cure diseases caused by them[3]. That these were still efficacious had been demonstrated, Josephus assured his readers, by one Eleazar, who by reciting an incantation which Solomon had composed and by making mention of his name, drew demons out of the nose of a demoniac in the presence of Vespasian and his army[4].

Josephus thus aimed to vindicate the right of his race to a place of honor in the society of his day. He based his claim on the intrinsic

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1. C. Ap. II, 23-32.
2. C. Ap. II, 40.
3. Ant. VIII, 2, 5.
4. Ant. VIII, 2, 5.

value of the law of the Jews, combined with their faithful observance of it. It was a pragmatic test resting on the type of human life produced. The fair-minded Gentile who wished to discover the truth for himself was invited to examine their sacred books. Consequently in Hellenistic Judaism the oral tradition was at a serious disadvantage, and the written word assumed a constantly increasing importance. This was reflected first of all in the demand for its translation into Greek. The necessity of maintaining the national spirit, which in turn demanded a satisfactory answer to the crucial problem of the righteous nation and the righteous man who had to suffer, and to the question of man's place in the universe, turned men to the sacred books for information and courage and guidance. Sacred books were also a factor in self-control, and, in the confusion of an eclectic age in philosophy and ethics, they became the source of certainty. Finally, in an age which measured values and classified races on the basis of their comparative antiquity, the Jews found their Scriptures a powerful aid in their struggle for social recognition.

PART TWO: EMERGENT CHRISTIANITY

CHAPTER V

SCRIPTURE MEDIATED THROUGH THE PERSONALITY AND THE PRECEDENT OF JESUS

Introduction: The twofold influence of Scripture on the followers of Jesus.

The first Christians reaped the harvest sown by the Hellenistic Jews. The Synagogue was the center of the earliest missionary activity, and there at the very beginning an appeal to the Old Testament on the part of the followers of the new Way was not only possible but necessary as well. It was possible in that both Jews and proselytes found in these sacred writings the values set forth above in Part One; and it was necessary because of the Messianic claims advanced in behalf of Jesus; his followers and their prospective converts were immediately driven to search the Scriptures to see "whether these things were true"[1]. To be sure, Jesus himself and the indwelling Holy Spirit motivated the new life, and were consequently the primary authority; but the high claims made for him only made more imperative some objective source of authentication for them.

However they might differ in minor matters, the first Christians had this in common that they believed in Jesus as the Messianic Lord whom God had raised from the dead[2]. For Paul this faith was reinforced by the promise of Isaiah 28:16 that the believer would not be disappointed[3], and by the assurance of Joel 2:32 (LXX) that every one who called

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1. Acts 17:11 2. Rom. 10:9-10 3. Rom. 10:11

upon the name of the Lord would be saved[1]. Notwithstanding his conviction that the Law had lost its binding force because it had found its fulfillment in Christ, "Paul was to the last a pious Bible Jew, a LXX Jew"[2]. To him the LXX was authoritative, and the phrase "It is written", which was the Hellenistic formula used to refer to the terms of an unalterable agreement, was similarly employed by him in advancing proofs from Scripture. God himself had spoken in Scripture, and of his truth there revealed the Christian teachers were stewards. In his capacity of steward Paul considered himself and Apollos so faithful that he could recommend to the Corinthian Christians to follow their example in not going beyond the things that were written[3]. Admittedly, allegory was often necessary to make these writings live for Paul and his contemporaries, but that did not at all prevent their authentication of their religious experiences by reference to the sacred Scriptures[4].

The Old Testament writings had, of course, functioned in the life of Jesus himself. It is therefore necessary to determine how his use of them influenced that of his followers. At first the appeal to the Old Testament gave added authority to his own words and deeds, and was consequently of great value, both in his own ministry and in the subsequent missionary work of his followers; then, as the figure of Jesus loomed larger and larger, he became self-validating, and the authority of the Old Testament receded into the background. At this stage its attachment to Jesus was an important factor in preventing it from falling into disuse in those cases where its immediate and intrinsic value to his followers

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1. Rom. 10:13.
2. Adolf Deissmann: St. Paul: A study in Social and Religious History, trans. by L. R. M. Strachan, N. Y. 1912, p. 101.
3. I Cor. 4:6.
4. Deissmann, ib. p. 101-6.

might not have been sufficient to cause its retention. Thus the Old Testament exerted a twofold influence on the formation of the New, one phase being mediated through the personality of Jesus and stimulated by the example he had set in its use, the other being exerted directly in the lives of the Christians. From the standpoint of a study of the function of sacred books in emergent Christianity as it affected the growth of a New Testament canon by the side of the Old Testament, the study of the complex inter-relationships between these two phases is of primary importance.

In making such a study the application of the "formgeschichtliche Methode" now being employed by German scholars is useful, and the recognition of the fact that since the gospels are the literary deposit of the life of the Christian communities, they are to be interpreted first of all in the light of the needs of those who produced them, and are therefore to be considered as historical with respect to the situation of their writers, but not necessarily as actual events in the life of Jesus in those cases where they seem to fit better into the later period, is the correct mode of procedure. The personal equation and the subjective element involved in assigning a given passage to one period or another must, however, be frankly recognized and, as far as possible, eliminated. Unless this is done there is danger that the influence of Jesus himself in such a matter as the use of Scripture may be obscured. The chief factor in the tradition of the words and deeds of Jesus, whatever they may have been, was their functional value for those who narrated them, and one would naturally expect to find them applying more or less closely, though of course with constant modifications, to a

whole series of situations similar to that which first called them forth. To any one of the series they might fit so closely as to make it extremely difficult apart from the subjective feeling of the student to assign them to one period rather than to another. Only in proportion as this subjective element can be overcome will the results be more than tentative.

I. Jesus as a reader of the Old Testament.

Determination of the problem to what extent Scripture quotations are to be attributed to Jesus involves first of all the question whether Jesus was able to read the Hebrew Old Testament. The fact that a man was not the product of any of the official schools by no means implies that he had not studied the Mishna even, to say nothing of the Scripture. In the second century A.D. an Am-ha-aretz was defined as one who, although he had studied both Scripture and Mishna, had not attended the schools. It was laid down as a principle that study of the Torah would lead to the practice of it[1], and hence those who did not observe such regulations as the proper time of reciting the Shema, or of wearing the Tephillin, were assumed not to have studied. Notwithstanding this, the learned class might receive brilliant recruits from these more humble and often despised people. Such was the case of the famous R. Akiba (d. 135 A.D.), who is said to have descended from a proselyte family and to have been altogether illiterate up to the age of his manhood[2]. In spite of this, he entered a school, and later exercised great influence on the development of the traditional law. In his youth he shared the hatred of the Am-ha-aretz for the educated class[3]. His later conformity to the

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1. Ber. 47b Bar.; Strack-B, II, p. 497.
2. Mielziner, Intro. to the Talmud, 1925, p. 29.
3. Pes. 49b; Strack-B, II, p. 519.

traditions of the school caused this to be forgotten, but it is safe to say that independent study on his part would not have gained him the recognition he received. But if an Am-ha-aretz was thus on occasion inspired to enter a recognized school, it was equally possible that his ambition should lead him to study outside the schools.

Nor would the assumed responsibility of Jesus for the support of his family (an assumption dependent on an argument from silence concerning Joseph) necessarily prevent his study of the Old Testament. The great Hillel himself had gone through a severe struggle with poverty for his education, and in this he was but true to the Jewish ideal of combining the study of Torah with worldly occupation.

Finally, in dealing with the fact that the gospel records constantly represent Jesus as appealing to the Old Testament writings there remains the broader consideration of his power as a teacher, which reveals unmistakably elements in common with it.

II. The influence of Scripture on Jesus' conception of his mission.

It is next in order to determine how the Old Testament Scripture actually functioned in the life of Jesus. At the very beginning of his public activity he had been strongly attracted by the preaching of John the Baptist, which was itself suffused with the spirit of the Old Testament; but instead of calling people into the desert he went where they were in an effort to make them understand that God was already at work in his world, and that whatever might be their political state, they ought so to live that his kingdom might be realized in the existing society. Since this effort right in the midst of society was certain to

be much more formidable in the eyes of the political and social interests to which it happened to run counter, it was bound to provoke bitter hostility and to involve a corresponding danger to the one who put it forth. Consequently the possibility of death became more and more evident to Jesus as time went on. What was the influence of Scripture on him as he faced this possibility, and why did he consider it necessary to risk his life in Jerusalem?

That he had identified himself with the suffering Servant of Isaiah may indeed be difficult in view of his own protest against his cup of suffering, especially when taken in conjunction with Paul's explicit ascription of the doctrine to Scripture rather than to actual utterances of Jesus, and with the insistence of Luke-Acts that it was only after the final tragedy that the minds of his followers were opened to understand it in the light of the Scriptures[1]; but to recognize that the cosmic significance ultimately attached to his sufferings grew out of the developing life of the Christians by no means implies that Jesus was uninfluenced by the conception of the Suffering Servant. Even as the prophets of old had suffered in carrying out their mission, so also he expected suffering both for himself and for his followers.[2] It was the paradox of saving one's life by losing it[3], and of being first by becoming servant of all[4]. Moreover, the teaching of Jesus as embodied in the Sermon on the Mount[5] is conceived in the spirit of Isaiah 61, which while later than and not classed with the "Servant" passages proper[6], nevertheless embodies the prophetic aspect of the Servant's

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1. B. W. Bacon, The Apostolic Message, N. Y. 1925, p. 214.
2. Mt. 5:12; Lk. 6:23.
3. Mt. 10:39; Lk. 17:33.
4. Mk. 9:35.
5. Mt. 5:1-12; Lk. 6:20-24.
6. Is. 42:1-4; 49:1-6; 50:4-9; 52:13-53:12.

function, an aspect which even for the latter overshadows the idea of suffering. Jesus proclaimed precisely the sort of message proposed by the prophet: good tidings to the poor, comfort and joy to those who mourn, justice and righteousness before all nations. Luke sensed the kinship between this chapter in Isaiah and the program and teaching of Jesus, and represented him accordingly as beginning his ministry by reading it in the synagogue at Nazareth[1]. Whether or not Jesus actually read the passage under the circumstances described, the basis of its ascription to him is something more than the product of the inter-relation between the Christians and the Synagogue: Jesus himself was influenced by it.

Jesus could not have been under any illusions as to the consequences which he and his followers would have to suffer for such an overt act as the ejection of the traders from the temple. Near the close of the life of Herod the Great two rabbis, Judas the son of Sepphoraeus and Matthias the son of Margalus, had incited a group of their young disciples to pull down the golden eagle which he had erected over the gate of the temple. When Herod asked them by whose command they had done this, they appealed to the law of their country, stating that they were only carrying into practice what they had learned by hearing the law[2]: death for their laws was a glorious thing because immortality and eternal happiness awaited those who died thus. Deserted by all save forty of their followers and burned alive[3], their fate would have been a sufficient warning to Jesus against overconfidence in the firmness of the people as

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1. Lk. 4:16-21.
2. Josephus, War, I 32:3; Ant. XVII 6:3.
3. Josephus, Ant. XVII 6:3.

a whole. The state of mind even of his closest followers is pictured by Mark: "And as they went on their way up to Jerusalem, Jesus walked ahead of them, and they were in dismay, and those who still followed were afraid"[1]. To prepare them for martyrdom if necessary he, like Judas and Matthias, had to assure them of the final victory of his cause.

The assurance embodied in the book of Daniel was ready at hand. That Jesus pointed to the Danielic figure of the representative of Israel receiving the everlasting kingdom at the heavenly judgment seat of the "Ancient of Days" is shown by the frequent ascription to him of the title "Son of Man", usually coupled with the warning to prepare for martyrdom. This does not mean, of course, that he deliberately set himself to carry out the role of the Son of Man by way of the fulfillment of prophecy. Although he seems to have referred openly to the coming of this heavenly figure, he did not openly identify himself with him[2]. The case is similar with the identification of Jesus with the Davidic Messiah.

Yet, although the belief in the Davidic Messiahship of Jesus was probably not a part of his "gospel", it did grow out of it. For Jesus, to whatever extent he shared the common expectation of a catastrophic end of the Age, was by no means limited by the purely passive expectation. He did not, it is true, align himself with the political presumption of the Zealots, but he did champion the ideals and hopes of the simple Galilean Chasidim. To a patriotic Jew of this more remote section of Palestine, whose religion was more immediately inspired by the Synagogue

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1. Mk. 10:32.
2. Foakes Jackson and Lake, The Beginnings of Christianity, Part I, Vol. I, Proleg. I, 1920, p. 283.

with its emphasis on the study of the Scriptures, and whose ideal of the temple was "a house of prayer for all peoples" it was exasperating to find his Father's house turned into a bazaar seething with graft and in control of a corrupt clique of priestly politicians. While Jesus discouraged overt political action, he did nevertheless aim to pave the way for the realization of the patriotic hopes of his people by restoring the spiritual worship which was prerequisite thereto. This was his motive in attacking the corrupt practices of the party in control of the temple services. The Old Testament Scriptures, which had nourished his ideal, became also the basis of his appeal for the authentication of his action. The particular Scripture to which he appealed was Isaiah 57:6 and Jer. 7:11.[1]. The quotation in this connection is ascribed to Jesus by all the Synoptists, and in view of its naturalness under the circumstances, it is better to recognize it in the setting they have given it than to refer it to a later time and circumstances. Those in control were not slow to challenge his authority[2], and he was in need of just such an authority to which he could appeal. In so far, however, as his cleansing of the temple and his vindication of it by Scripture aroused the approval and the enthusiasm of those who entertained the expectation of a Davidic king, Jesus seems to have attempted so to restrain the patriotic motive as to make it serve the higher ends he had in view. Thus the initial impulse toward the identification of Jesus with the Son of David lay in what he had actually said and done without making the claim for himself; but at the same time the early abandonment of this conception as

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1. Mk. 11:17; Mt. 21:13; Lk. 19:46.
2. Mk. 11:28; Mt. 21:23; Lk. 20:2.

evidenced by the especial hostility of Mark could also lay claim to his attitude and to his words for its justification. The nucleus of history lying behind the attitude thus combatted by Mark as well as back of the special source of Luke 1:68-79, which strongly emphasized the nationalistic and Jewish Christian element in the Messianic ideal of "a horn of salvation" raised up in the house of God's servant David so that thenceforward his people might "serve him in holiness and uprightness unafraid," is the fact that Jesus did feel and respond to the call for national leadership, and that he thought of himself as the representative of those for whom the kingdom had been decreed[1]. Both the call and the response show the influence of the Old Testament Scripture.

III. Jesus, the Old Testament and the future life.

The effort of Jesus to get men to live the kind of life which would recognize practically not only the <u>future</u>, but also the <u>present</u> sovereignty of God had led to his death; but instead of being crushed by this apparent catastrophe, the new religious movement derived from it a message of peculiar religious power. This ability to turn defeat into victory came by way of the resurrection experiences. Now the very nature of these experiences demanded the support of Scripture. To those who shared them they were intensely real, yet subjective in nature and, what was more difficult, discontinuous. Memories, however, of what Jesus had been, and of what he had said and done, were actively at work. As prophet of the kingdom of God his activities had been inspired in part by

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1. Cf. Bacon, The Apostolic Message, especially Chapter VII.

the preaching of John the Baptist, and so it was but natural to compare the two. Indeed, some even thought that Jesus was John alive again. Others were reminded of Elijah, or, more vaguely, of "one of the prophets[1]. The mysterious figure of Elijah, who was to appear before "the great and terrible day of Jahweh"[2] exercised a special influence in familiarizing the minds of Jesus' contemporaries with the conception of the continuous life and possible reappearance at any time of ancient worthies. The Jews of his day, who were familiar with the story of Elijah, whether by hearing or by actual reading, were assured that the great prophet knew in advance that he was to be taken from the earth[3]. Quite similar was the case of Moses[4]. In both instances the historical sequence of events, whatever they may have been, was telescoped, and prophecies ex eventu found an integral place in them, the whole narrative being viewed as actual history.

Had Jesus, a prophet considered thus worthy to be compared with Moses and Elijah, also foretold his death and resurrection? The Synoptic gospels explicitly state that he had, and the importance which their writers attached to this point is shown by the threefold recurrence of the prediction in each of them[5]. The final catastrophe of Jesus' life was incompatible with the Messianic hopes that had been attached to him; but when once his followers had reached the conviction that he himself had foretold not merely his death, but his triumph over it as well, they had received the necessary motivation for courageous living with the fact of

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1. Mk. 6:15-16; 8:28; Lk. 9:19; Mt. 16:14 adds Jeremiah.
2. Mal. 4:5.
3. I Kgs. 19:16; II Kgs. 2:1-12.
4. Deut. 31:2; 32:48-52.
5. Mk. 8:31; Mt. 16:21; Lk. 9:22 (17:25) - Mk. 9:31; Mt. 17:22-23; Lk.9:44-Mk. 10:32-34; Mt. 20:17-18; Lk. 18:31-34.

disaster, both in the case of their Master and also in their own lives, and in their own sufferings and disappointments. It was not without difficulty, however, that they arrived at the conviction that Jesus had known all in advance. Prepared as they were by such examples as the career of Elijah, which was, of course, but one element in the total contemporary Jewish and non-Jewish religious life, they stood too near to Jesus to make it easy for them to believe in all that the prophets had spoken[1]. It is therefore evident that while the growing needs of the Christians gradually led them to see more and more of Christ in the Old Testament, at the initial stages of the process, the recollection of Jesus' personal attitude toward and application of the Scriptures to his own needs and to the needs of others would serve as points of origin for the later development.

What was the personal attitude of Jesus towards the future life? Those who appealed to Scripture to authenticate the resurrection appearances were at the same time able to reinforce their conviction by reference to Jesus' own absolute assurance of the future. When the Sadducees had attempted to show the absurdity of such a belief by stating the hypothetical case of the seven brothers who had, in accordance with the law of Moses[2], been successively the husbands of one woman, Jesus charged them with failure to understand the Scriptures and the power of God: "Have you never read in the Book of Moses, in the passage about the bush, how God said to him, 'I am the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob'?[3] He is not the God of dead men but of living!" That was equivalent to saying that the resurrection was

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1. Lk. 24:25.
2. Deut. 25:5; Gen. 38:8.
3. Mk. 12:26-27; Mt. 22:31-32; Lk. 20:37-38.

implicit in the character of the God who appeared to Moses, and who was to be known by intelligent readers of the Book of Moses.

Was this from Jesus himself,or as Bultmann maintains, a reflection of the theological debates of the church?[1] "That the Sadducees here appear as opponents", he says, "rests upon their traditional role of deniers of the resurrection; as a matter of fact they will scarcely at any time have engaged in debate either with Jesus or with the church". On the contrary in Jesus' day and on down to the destruction of the temple in the year 70, but not after that year, this was precisely the sort of thing to be expected of them. The high-priestly families of the Herodian-Roman period, belonged to the Sadducean party[2]; but in their official acts they had to accommodate themselves to Pharisaic views[3]. They did not share the Messianic hopes of the Pharisees, who were willing to commit the future into the hands of God; they considered it a virtue to argue with their teachers[4]; they did not believe in angels or demons; and they insisted on a literal interpretation of the principle of eye for eye and tooth for tooth as against the milder interpretation of the Pharisees[5]. "Especially", says Kohler, "in regard to the temple practice did they hold views based upon claims of greater sanctity for the priesthood and of its sole dominion over the sanctuary"[6]. For their authority for such views they appealed to the written Torah, which alone they acknowledged to be binding[7]. Now every one of these items of belief

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1. Die Geschichte der Synoptischen Tradition, Göttingen 1921; p. 13; for a criticism see Fascher, Die formgeschichtliche Methode, Giessen 1924, p. 92.
2. Acts 5:17; Josephus, Ant. 29:9:1.
3. Ant. 18:1:4.
4. Ant. 13:10:6.
5. K. Kohler in JE article "Sadducees", Vol. X, p. 631.
6. Ib. p. 632.
7. Ant. 13:8:6; cf. 18:1:4.

and practice bristled with points of conflict with Jesus as well as with the early church. Jesus was preaching righteousness and trust in God for salvation instead of taking advantage of political measures: herein lay the deeper motive of their antipathy to the belief in the resurrection. Their disbelief in angels and demons tended to dispose them unfavorably toward the healing activities of Jesus; they were at the opposite pole from him on the question of retribution; and, most important of all, his insistence that the spiritual element in worship be given free range in the temple services threatened to align the people on his side against the prerogatives of the aristocratic Sadducean families at the very time when they were already being compelled to compromise with the wishes of the Pharisees.

The record of the encounter is found in all three Synoptics, together with the ascription of the quotation from Exodus 3:6 to Jesus. Fascher, while rejecting Bultmann's interpretation of the incident itself, feels that one may admit Mark 18:26f., which contains the quotation, to be an addition. In that case, however, the answer of Jesus in verse 25 would have been worse than ineffective, for it would not only have had no support from the written Torah, which the Sadducees would have demanded, but would have touched another controversial point by its reference to the angels. That the quotation from Scripture was necessary to meet them on their own ground is shown by the labored proofs of the resurrection from the Torah given by R. Gamliel (ca. 90 A.D.) in answer to the Sadducees.[1] He appealed to all three divisions of the Old Testament, the Torah, the Prophets and the Hagiographa, citing respectively Deut. 31:16,

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1. San. 90b; Strack-B, I, p. 893.

Is. 26:19 and Song of Solomon 7:9. Moreover, the answer of Jesus, "He is not the God of dead men, but of living!" is quite in keeping with his gigantesque style, and it is just the sort of thing that would impress itself and be most easily remembered.

Such a saying of Jesus, itself originally authenticated by Scripture, was of course applicable indefinitely in similar situations in which the developing church found itself[1]. Conceivably this "debate" might have originated at some similar point in the history down to the destruction of the temple; but in that case the considerations set forth in favor of accepting its attribution to Jesus would have to be set aside, and moreover, it would be difficult to understand why the Old Testament reference should have been attached to Jesus at all when his resurrection was the very point at issue, and when, therefore, the quotation would have carried more weight with outsiders if it had not been referred to him. Nor, in view of the fact that the first Christians were so strongly convinced of the early return of Jesus, is one free to suppose that it was the product of internal argument among members of the church.

The reference of Jesus to the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob had been more than a mere quotation, in that it presupposed the whole background of Old Testament history. Another illustration of the influence of the Old Testament upon him is reflected in the manner in which both Matthew and Luke bring quotations from Hosea into association with him[2]. The kinship between the ministry of Jesus and the appeal of the prophet Hosea is close enough to warrant the conclusion that the book bearing

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1. Cf. for example Acts 4:1ff.; 5:17; 23:1ff.
2. Mt. 2:15 and Hos. 11:1; Mt. 9:13; 12:7 and Hos. 6:6; Lk. 23:30 and Hos. 10:8.

Hosea's name was a source of religious inspiration to Jesus[1]. In his great chapter on the resurrection[2] Paul had made use of Hosea 13:14. At the beginning of the chapter he had said, "For I passed on to you as of first importance, the account I had received that Christ died for our sins as the Scriptures foretold, that he was buried, that on the third day he was raised from the dead as the Scriptures foretold, and that he was seen by Cephas and then by the Twelve". Now was Hosea 6:2, "After three days he will revive us: on the third day he will raise us up, and we shall live before him", one of these "Scriptures"? In view of the fact that this verse, which would have been so useful to the first Christians, is not actually cited in the New Testament, it cannot be confidently affirmed that it figured in the thought of Jesus, unless indeed, it be supposed that the application of the passage was so obvious and general that it was unnecessary to cite it explicitly. Since it is difficult to see how Matthew, for example, who quoted the sixth verse of the same chapter twice, could not have known the second verse also, there is a possibility that this was the case. This, however, by no means implies that Jesus actually referred to the passage in question as a prophecy of his own resurrection: that would have come after the event; but face to face with death he may well have derived from it courage for himself and his followers, or, what is more important, the hope expressed in it may have been part of his message to the people at large. Whatever the fact may have been in this case, the actual use of Hosea in the New Testament is sufficient evidence of the ease with which it functioned in

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1. See especially Hos. 6; 10:12ff., and 14.
2. I Cor. 15:55.

the lives of the Christians. The only point to be insisted on is that Jesus in his conception of his mission, in his presentation of his message, and in his assurance of the future revealed an attitude toward, and set an example of the use of the Scriptures of his people, which made the subsequent development of their use in the Christian church easy and natural: that is to say, Scripture was mediated through the personality of Jesus.

CHAPTER VI

THE DIRECT INFLUENCE OF SCRIPTURE AS REVEALED BY THE WRITERS OF THE NEW TESTAMENT

The foregoing discussion of Jesus' conception of his task and its relation to the Old Testament figures of the Suffering Servant, the Son of Man, and the Son of David has made it clear that the Jewish sacred writings acted upon the emerging religious movement in a twofold manner, one phase of influence being indirect and through the medium of his own personality, the other acting immediately through the lives of the successive generations of his followers. Thus on the one hand Scripture functioned in the life of Jesus himself as a source of inspiration and as a basis of authentication for his claims to leadership, while on the other hand, after having been transformed and interpreted in the light of his personality, it became a source of authority for the innovations practised by the Christians as over against the orthodox Jews, and as a support in their struggles for a place in the gentile religious world.

I. Sacred books and eschatology.

Their first enthusiasms were motivated by the hope of the early return of their Lord. It has already been shown that the Old Testament functioned in the life of Jesus as a source of assurance of the future life and of the ultimate triumph of the righteous. In its predictive capacity it continued to function for his immediate followers, who thought of his return and of the end of the Age as close at hand. Crisis

by crisis through the first century, the Old Testament writings, now gathering to themselves additional material made authoritative by its origin or connection with Jesus, furnished the assurance they needed for the future.

Daniel's prophecy of the desolating abomination[1] furnishes one of the completest illustrations of a Scripture which was capable of functioning perennially in this capacity[2]. The attempt of Caius in the year 40 A.D. to have his statue set up in the temple at Jerusalem threatened to repeat the horrors attending the efforts of Antiochus Epiphanes to hellenize the Jews nearly two centuries before. It was therefore natural that the prophecy which had come out of the earlier period of stress should be applied to their own situation by those who were confronted by a repetition of the persecution; but on account of the resistance of the Jews and of the death of the megalomaniac Emperor, the expectation that the desolation spoken of by Daniel would find its fulfillment in the presence of his statue in the Holy Place was not realized.

Meanwhile a crisis greater than that of the year 70 (which is the one usually stressed) was developing in the relations between the Jews and Christians in Palestine. To gain favor with the strict adherents of the law, Agrippa upon his accession in 41 A.D. had attacked the church. Under these circumstances a little Apocalypse embodying the prophecy of Daniel had gone forth as a "word of the Lord". Excepting

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1. Dan. 12:11.
2. See B. W. Bacon's reconstruction of the development of the Doom chapters of Mt., Mk., and Lk. in his Gospel of Mark, New Haven, 1925, pp. 79-134.

the identification of the prophetic abomination with the Emperor's statue, its "predictions" were vindicated to Christian minds by the sudden death of Agrippa and the famine and civil war of 45-46 A.D. The Jews, they thought, were merely reaping the harvest of wrath which they had sown by their rejection of Jesus and their expulsion of his followers, and their fate was but a confirmation of the divine command to go into all the world.

To be effective a prophecy had to be flexible enough to avoid the reproach of non-fulfillment from some keen-eyed party of opposition, and at the same time it had to keep far enough, but not too far, in the future to yield comfort and incentive to Christian enterprise. Flexibility was, of course, more natural to an oral prophecy passing as a word of the Lord than to the static written word. Consequently whenever, as in this case, a written prophecy had been incorporated with a word of the Lord, some adjustment had to be made as soon as its non-fulfillment had become apparent.

In I and II Thessalonians the necessary adjustment assumed the form of postponement[1]. For the time being the mystery of lawlessness, which had been manifested in such attempts as that of Caius against the true religion, was being restrained; but it was still secretly at work, and no sooner was the restraining power to be removed than a general apostasy would occur. It was to be induced by Antichrist, the agent of Satan, who would sit in the temple of God; and the embodiment of disobedience, accompanied by pretended signs and wonders to deceive and destroy those

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1. I Thess. 4:13-5: 11 and II Thess. 2:1-12.

who had refused to believe the truth, would appear, only, however, to be slain immediately by the breath of the Lord Jesus. The reason for setting back the apocalyptic clock was the assassination of Caius (which removed the immediate threat) and the favor shown to the Jews by Claudius because of his indebtedness to Agrippa I. As a restrainer, however, Claudius (if he is to be correctly so regarded) was not altogether effective against the current of anti-Semitism. According to Josephus[1] a Syrian mob actually set up a statue of him in the synagogue at Dor. The tinder was thus in preparation, and the conditions for the modification, rejuvenation, and forward thrust of the prophecy were ideal. The necessary condition was realized in the conflict between Jewish and Christian monotheism and the Graeco-Roman religions, and coupled with this struggle was the distress of the Christians at the delay of the appearance of the Lord. Christian was not yet distinguished from Jew, and pogroms were general. Consequently prophecies springing up on Palestinian soil could easily be transferred elsewhere.

This Paul did in the case of the Thessalonians. Taking the Danielic prophecy of the "desolating abomination" which had been thought of as foreboding the fulfillment of Caius' threat, he personalized it into Antichrist, and transferred the conflict from the realm of the political to the spiritual, thereby making it live once more with inspiration and comfort. This was in the year 50.

The next stages of the development are shown respectively in Mark, Matthew and Luke. Paul, writing before the destruction of the temple, thought that the manifestation of the Lawless One would take place there.

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1. Ant. 19:6:3.

Mark, writing after that event, saw that Dan. 11:31 was no longer possible of literal fulfillment. He therefore, while still interpreting the desolating abomination as Antichrist, retained the Danielic title and thought of him vaguely as "standing where he ought not". Like Paul, he was at pains to restrain the extravagant apocalyptic expectations which were induced among Christians of Jewish birth by the catastrophe of the year 70. To this end he warned his readers to get the proper understanding of the prophecy, for in spite of the danger of misinterpretation, he could not drop it entirely: it served too well to confirm the Christian in his hopes that since the "tribulation" was now past, the real consumation was at hand, and, moreover, it had been bound up with a "word of the Lord". So he reminded them that the political disaster was only <u>one</u> of the signs of the end, and that there must first be a world-wide persecution for the name of Christ, in which the faithful would be delivered up to sanhedrins and synagogues, governors and kings. With the passing of Claudius the pogroms were no longer "restrained", for with Nero claiming and receiving divine honors there was no lack of pending trouble for the Christians. The last years of Claudius, even, were marked by the expulsion of both Jews and Christians from Rome on account of an anti-Semitic outbreak. According to a prediction of the Ascension of Isaiah[1] Beliar would set up his image in every city. Finally under Gesius Florus, the robbery and oppression of the Jews by their Samaritan and gentile neighbors resulted in a rebellion in Judea. In the midst of this danger, the Christians, remembering the quite general warnings of Jesus,

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1. As. of Is. 4:11.

and commanded by a divine revelation given to men of approved piety before the war, had gone to Pella[1].

Under these circumstances a Scripture already fulfilled was guaranteed as to its reliability for the future. Since, therefore, the temple was destroyed by Titus before the Danielic expectation was realized, Matthew, like Mark, was under the necessity of conforming it to what had actually transpired, viz. to some such event as the profanation of a synagogue in Caesarea, which had been the spark of the rebellion of the year 70[2]. Matthew did this by substituting "a" holy place for "the" holy place, at the same time making specific reference to Daniel. Then, repressing the premature enthusiasm of his readers, he gave them ultimate encouragement by directing their attention to an event still farther, but yet not too far, in the future: the coming of the Son of Man on the clouds of heaven[3] after a period of tribulation among the gentiles with its attendant apostasy and lawlessness.

For Luke, the desolating abomination was the Roman siege forces. The great tribulation described by Daniel[4] had been fulfilled by the slaughter and captivity of the people and the treading down of Jerusalem by the gentiles until the fulfillment of their "times". Like Matthew, he sounded a note of encouragement to expect the coming soon[5].

Thus while Paul and the Synoptic writers alike reflect a period when this very definite prophecy of Daniel was being applied crisis by crisis to new situations as they arose, they also reflect its gradual detachment from Jerusalem, together with a corresponding ambiguity of time and place. From Jerusalem its application moved to the outliving parts of Palestine

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1. Euseb. H. E. III 5:3.
2. Josephus, War 2:14:5.
3. Dan. 7:13 LXX.
4. Dan. 12:1.
5. Lk. 21:28.

(Dor and Caesarea), and from thence it took its way to gentile soil, there to function in situations similar to that which had given it birth. It was never too accurately fulfilled to prevent its projection just a little farther into the future, yet it always corresponded closely enough to the actual events to give it the authority requisite for the confidence and assurance of those still engaged in the age-long struggle for monotheism.

Involved, however, in this struggle was the complicating factor of intense hostility between the Church and the Synagogue, which had meanwhile been introduced. Thus even while functioning as a weapon against Rome, the supreme symbol of wickedness which was personified by John the Revelator as "Mighty Babylon, mother of idolatresses and of earth's abominations"[1], this prophecy from Daniel retained its Jewish applications. On the one hand these prophecies of doom, which had already come true in the main against the unbelieving Jews when, with their temple destroyed, they had been slaughtered and dispersed, could be relied upon as predictions of the victory of the true Synagogue (i.e.the Christians) over the "Synagogue of Satan" (i.e. of those who while alleging themselves to be Jews, had by rejecting Jesus as the Messiah in reality gone over to Satan's synagogue)[2]. On the other hand they furnished equal assurance of triumph over the Koinon of Asia, which was symbolized by John in the two-horned, dragon-voiced beast, which in its representative capacity exercised all the authority of the imperial Beast of Rome itself[3]. Moreover, they gave the followers of Jesus patience to stand firm through the constant, and hence even more trying

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1. Rev. 17:5. 2. Rev. 2:9. 3. Rev. 13:11-18.

difficulties, arising from the race prejudice in all parts of the Empire, which at any time might use the Imperial Cultus as its instrument, even when the Emperor himself was not disposed to press his claims for divine honors. Although the danger was thus always present, it was natural that under such emperors as Caius, Nero, and Domitian the nerve of resistance should become tense to the breaking point. In the nature of the case, also, each crisis appeared more severe than the previous ones to those who had to go through it. In the days of Domitian, therefore, John and his churches in Asia needed all the assurance that could be derived from prophecy fulfilled in the past. Like Daniel he thought of the heavenly books in which the deeds of men were written for their judgment[1]. More explicitly than Daniel he derived especial comfort from the thought that the names of the faithful were written in the Book of Life, finding supreme assurance in his vision of the Lamb, the Lion of the tribe of Judah, the root of David, who had been found worthy to receive from the right hand of God himself the Book of Destiny which symbolized his control over all history.

It has already been seen that these Old Testament prophecies were not fulfilled in all their details, nor had that ideal kingdom of God come, for which the fathers had hoped, and for which the martyrs had died. What then of the faithful who had already died? And of those who were to suffer death in the future? Not every one had been able to stop the mouths of lions or quench the power of fire or escape the edge of the sword. Yet strangely enough this very non-fulfillment of prophecy could be urged as the motive for standing firm. The writer of Hebrews, for example, who was concerned with the crisis under Domitian as it

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1. Rev. 20:12-15; Dan. 7:10.

affected the Roman Christians in particular, reminded his readers (or hearers) that the heroes of the past were still waiting for their reward, and that unless they, the living, were also faithful unto death, those who had suffered in the past could not enter their reward[1].

The Danielic prophecy under consideration is, of course, only one of the many from the Old Testament which functioned in the lives of the Christians for and by whom the New Testament was written. It has been chosen as illustrative because the history of its use in the first century can be traced so completely--seen in action as it were almost decade by decade; for even at the close of that century the writer of the Fourth Gospel, notwithstanding his philosophy of the continuity of life and of judgment as a perpetual present process, availed himself of its promise of a resurrection side by side with his more spiritual conception[2]. Attached at first to some general warning of Jesus, it was then developed by the Christian prophets as a "word of the Lord". Then as each generation saw the fulfillment in the experience of those preceding, it gained an authority which tended to augment that of Jesus himself. On the other hand, by being incorporated with sayings attributed to him, it secured for itself safe transmission through the decades, and in sections of Christendom not primarily interested in apocalyptic. Old Testament prophecy was part of the arterial system through which flowed the life blood which was to build up a New Testament canon. Without its connection with the heart of antiquity, the new religion could not have gained a place in a world already full of venerable systems of religion and philosophy.

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1. Heb. 11:40.
2. Dan. 12:2; Jn. 6:28.

II. Scripture and the life in the Spirit.

The figure may be carried farther and applied to the other functions of the Old Testament in the Christianity of the New Testament period; for somewhat as the arteries confine the blood to its proper channel, thereby giving direction to its body-building activities, the Old Testament came increasingly to confine and direct the ecstatic activities of the Spirit. Meanwhile as the life of the Spirit built up the body of the Church, the arterial system grew along with it, the new growth being comparable to the New Testament canon.

(a) The Old Testament in vindication of the phenomena of the Spirit. The Scriptures had foretold an outpouring of the Spirit in the coming Age. This alike was the explanation of the strange phenomena of Pentecost in Jerusalem[1] and of the "gifts" of which the Corinthian Church was so naively proud[2]. Familiarity with the Old Testament and the prevalent interpretation of it as prophecy entered into the psychology which made such phenomena possible; but ne sooner were these phenomena manifested than the Scriptures, like a mold, were ready at hand to give form and further content to them. The interaction between the Scriptures and the Spirit must be kept in mind constantly, in order, on the one hand, to determine the extent to which the pneumatic experiences were projected backward for authentication in the sacred books, and on the other, to evaluate fairly their immediate authority as occurrences independent of the past due to the immediate self-evidencing activity of God through the agency of his Spirit.

At first the words and deeds of Jesus were thought of as due to a special manifestation of the love and power of God in him. Being in

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1. Acts 2:14-21. 2. I Cor. 12.

accord with Old Testament ideas, this was only natural to his followers. To what extent Jesus made the attribution still easier by definite reference to the power of the Spirit in his own life is difficult to determine with precision. By virtue of his sense of the immediate presence of God and his intimate personal fellowship with him as Father, one would not expect him to emphasize the doctrine of the Spirit. As a matter of fact he does not seem to have done so[1]. It is certain, however, that he thought of unusual phenomena as due to the divine power acting through men, and that he claimed to act and to speak in the power of the Spirit of God[2]. When his enemies accused him of being in league with Beelzebub, he charged them with blaspheming the Holy Spirit, that is, with being so blind spiritually as to attribute the beneficent power behind his miracles to the activity of the prince of demons[3], whereas the spirit which dwelt in him was the Spirit of God[4]. Jesus had been influenced by the Baptist's word predicting the intervention of God in behalf of his people, and he conceived both his own mission and that of his followers as the seed-time for the new Kingdom. "There can be no doubt but that at the baptism Jesus was conscious of being possessed by some power external to himself, which he identified with the Spirit of God. It was by this that he wrought his wonderful cures and triumphed over the demons of disease and madness"[5]. It was his prerogative as one who was convinced of the present sovereignty of God, and who stood in the relation of sonship to him, to exercise such authority. He was in conscious cooperation with the same Spirit that had operated in the lives

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1. Cf. E. F. Scott, The Spirit in the New Testament, London 1923, p.77.
2. Foakes-Jackson and Lake, The Beginnings of Christianity, Part I, Vol. I, p. 288.
3. Mk. 3:20-30; Mt. 12:22-32; Lk. 11:14-23.
4. Scott, l.c. p. 76.
5. Jackson and Lake, l. c.p. 287-88.

of the heroes who by its aid had spoken in the pages of Scripture: "David himself said in the Spirit"--such was his introduction to his quotation from Psalm 110 (109):1.[1]

What has been said is sufficient to show how the development of the conception of the Spirit was related to Jesus himself: through him the Spirit had worked, and his own attitude and words pointed the way to the conclusion which the Christians drew from the experiences of the Resurrection and Pentecost. With these experiences came a new conception of the source of the Spirit. Acts represented the risen Jesus as pouring out the Spirit of God from heaven[2]; according to the Fourth Gospel it was on the day of resurrection that Jesus breathed on his disciples and said, "Receive ye the Holy Spirit"[3]. The development thus appears to have been first the Spirit of God working through Jesus during his ministry, and then the thought of the Spirit of God as the gift of the heavenly Jesus working through his followers on earth; then finally the Spirit of God was equated with the Spirit of Jesus. Parallel with this development went a change of emphasis from the sporadic and spectacular to the permanent and orderly activities of the Spirit.

(b) <u>Scripture and the transition from the ecstatic-revelatory to the didactic-interpretive type of Christianity</u>. In effecting the change the Old Testament was an important factor. Its function in this respect must be considered first in relation to the ecstatic activities of the primitive church. At the very beginning, according to Luke, speaking with tongues had to be vindicated against the scoffers who attributed it to

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1. Mk. 12:36; Mt. 22:43. 2. Acts 2:33. 3. Jn. 20:22.

intoxication." Joel 2:28-32, considered as prophecy, served to explain the phenomenon[1]. In like manner Paul turned Isaiah 28:11 against the unbelievers, showing thereby that the gift of tongues was a "sign" to them[2].

Not only did the Scriptures function defensively against external scepticism: they also served to regulate and give form and content to the pneumatic activities within the Christian groups. When the Corinthians fell into invidious comparisons between the various spiritual gifts with which their members were endowed, Paul admonished them not to go beyond the things which were written[3]. In accordance with the law women were to take a subordinate place, and hence to keep silence in the churches[4]. More important even than the sanction for orderliness was the fact that besides entering subconsciously into the ecstatic utterances themselves, the Old Testament could also serve as a mine for the "songs", "teachings", and "revelations" which occupied the Christians in their meetings[5]. To be sure, the "revelations" were conceived as something new; but that fact by no means excludes Scripture as one of the elements which produced them. They were, moreover, sometimes contradictory, and being such they constituted the primeval chaotic stuff of a new revelation which was itself destined to become authoritative. In his attempt to bring order out of this chaos, Paul appealed to the essential oneness of the Spirit expressing itself in a variety of ways[6], and he set up the recognition of Jesus as Lord as the test of a genuine revelation of the Holy Spirit[7].

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1. Acts 2:1-21.
2. I Cor. 14:21-22.
3. I Cor. 4:6.
4. I Cor. 14:33a-35.
5. I Cor. 14:26; Cf. Col. 3:16.
6. I Cor. 12.
7. I Cor. 12:3.

To be "of the same mind in the Lord" was an ideal possessed of momentous developmental power, but it was too evanescent to become permanently effective apart from its materialization in a more tangible standard. Now since the Old Testament had functioned in the earthly life of Jesus, it was not difficult to hear him speaking from its pages, and it consequently became the nucleus about which the chaotic elements of the new revelation gathered as a kind of new Torah. The whole process can be seen in the gospel of Matthew, which is quite evidently constructed on the Old Torah as a model. Men were indeed to be baptized into the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, but at the same time they were to be taught to observe the commandments of Jesus[1]. Luke also, whose two-volume work might be called the History of the Operation of the Holy Spirit, shows the inhibiting and standardizing force exerted on divergent individual manifestations of the Spirit under stress of the missionary movement with its resulting sense of solidarity. For a time the law of Moses as sealed by circumcision was regulative, and even when the sign of the covenant was no longer required, certain of the Mosaic regulations were still observed[2]. That the experience of the Spirit was not always first in point of time is shown in the case of Apollos[3], and of the Ephesian followers of the Baptist[4]. The Thessalonians were admonished not to stifle the Spirit[5]. Thus whether the type of Christianity was didactic to begin with, and was only later endowed with the Spirit, or whether it began as a pneumatic experience which was

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1. Mt. 28:19-20.
2. Acts 15:19-21; 15:28-29.
3. Acts 18:24-28.
4. Acts 19:1-7.
5. I Thess. 5:19.

afterwards restrained and directed by revelations already in existence, the Old Testament was capable of functioning in relation to it.

As time passed a significant change occurred in the relative position of the Spirit and the Sacred Scriptures. The creative phase, original to be sure, but not altogether independent of the existing written revelation, having produced the potential materials for an additional canonical authority, passed into the second stage in which the Spirit, conceived as revealing itself in the record, functioned as the interpreter of the sacred books. The nature of the first phase is indicated in the Fourth Gospel: "But the Helper, the holy Spirit which the Father will send in my place, will teach you everything and remind you of everything that I have told you"[1]; the second stage is illustrated by the Epistle to the Hebrews, the writer of which was convinced that by virtue of his possession of the Holy Spirit he was qualified to advance to a higher knowledge. Assuming the doctrine of the Spirit as one of the elementary and fundamental teachings of Christianity, he went on under its guidance to discover the hidden implications of what had been revealed in Scripture[2]. To him the Spirit was the vehicle as well as the interpreter of revelation[3]. The Old Testament as an essentially Christian book served as a source of that higher gnosis which seemed necessary to arouse the church from the dangers attendant upon its complacent satisfaction in the mere rudiments of its religion, fundamental as these were.

Gnosis, however, was not without its dangers: bad men and imposters also found it a ready tool. The writer of Second Timothy expected such men to go from bad to worse, deceiving and being deceived, while those

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1. Jn. 14:26. 2. Heb. 5:11-6:8. 3. Heb. 3:7; 9:8; 10:15.

who wished to live godly lives as followers of Christ would be persecuted[1]. In the struggle with these opponents, the man who from childhood had known the Scriptures was possessed of an incalculable advantage. From them he could draw the wisdom which through faith in Christ led to salvation. All Scripture was "divinely inspired, and useful in teaching, in reproof, in correcting faults, and in training in uprightness", so that the man of God might be "adequate, and equipped for any good work[2]". With the waning of the primitive eschatological expectations and the increasing sense of a universal brotherhood of believers that had to win a home for itself in this world as well as in the next, the Scriptures as a standard of faith and practice assumed a constantly increasing importance. The doctrine of the Spirit was in the process of absorption into the doctrine of the Church.

(c) Scripture and the founding of the Church. Scripture had also functioned in the development of the doctrine of the Church, which according to Acts was the society inspired by the Spirit, and, in turn, itself bestowing that Spirit. The Church had begun in the Synagogue, but at the very beginning its ascription of Messiahship to Jesus had aroused the opposition of the orthodox. Those who refused to accept Jesus as Lord and Christ were not easily convinced by evidence adduced from ecstatic phenomena. Consequently an appeal to Scripture to justify the departure from traditional Judaism was often more effective. For example, the use of Psalm 16:8-11 and Psalm 110:1 resulted quite successfully, being at once the proof that Jesus was now the exalted Messiah and the vindication of the Spirit as a gift from him[3]. On the

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1. II Tim. 3:12-13. 2. II Tim. 3:16-17. 3. Acts 2:22-42.

other hand, when the appeal was unsuccessful, examples of those who in a similar manner had resisted the Holy Spirit could be cited from Scripture. An illustration of this is the defense of Stephen[1]. Paul, to show the superiority of life in the Spirit over life under the law, allegorized the relationship between Hagar and Sarah and applied Isaiah 54:1 to the New Jerusalem[2].

As opposition from the Synagogue grew, the Jewish Christians had to appeal to the Gentiles. These Hellenistic Christians now abandoned Jewish practice, and the possession of the Spirit became still more important. Yet the Old Testament Scriptures continued to function. The very name of the Church (ecclesia), which had been used in the LXX to translate qahal suggested that the Christian church, not the Jewish, was the true people of God, and the whole Old Testament idea of the Chosen People" called out" from the world became basic for the brotherhood of the new religion. The change, however, was not accomplished without internal opposition. While it was undeniable that the Spirit had manifested itself in the lives of Gentiles as well as Jews[3], it was necessary to vindicate its guidance and its manifestation among them by reference to the Prophets[4].

Another difficulty involved in the Spirit-controlled society was the problem of rival groups and rival leaders. How was one to decide between those who laid claim to the guidance of the Spirit, but manifested such a variety of clashing activities and opinions as to confuse the

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1. Acts 7:51-53.
2. Gal. 4:21-31.
3. Acts 10:44-47; 11:12-18; 15:6-11.
4. Cf. Acts 15:12-21 where Amos 9:11-12 is quoted.

individual and threaten disruption of the group? In such cases the norm was Jesus himself rather than the Old Testament. Clashes in leadership were therefore directly effective in building up the New Testament by creating a need for a new written authority; for when a leader or a party was thus tested by its attitude toward the all-sufficiency of Jesus as Lord apart from the law, it was natural to look upon his example and his words as authoritative.

If the hypothesis of F. Jackson and Lake[1] is correct that the power of the Keys was originally an Antiochian and not a Roman claim for Peter, then Matthew's addition of it to Peter's confession[2] will serve as an excellent illustration of the process by which the elements of a sacred book originated and gathered authority. According to their hypothesis the "Thou art Peter" was evolved out of the differences between James as leader in Jerusalem and Peter as a partisan, even if hesitant, of the Hellenistic party at Antioch, which also claimed the leadership. Now, although Peter and Paul were both on the Hellenistic and not on the Hebrew side, there was still room for difference of opinion and rivalry between them[3]. Already in Antioch Paul had probably defended his apostleship by reference to the immediate revelation given him on the Damascus road[4]. If so, the supporters of Peter must have had an adequate answer in the direct promise of the Lord to him. Now suppose the scene transferred to Corinth: what could have been more useful to the Cephas party than to confront Paul's written claim to visions and revelations of the Lord and to the signs of an apostle[5] by this same promise which had

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1. Beginnings of Christianity, Part I, Vol. I, p. 304-312; 328-330.
2. Mt. 16:17-19.
3. Gal. 2:11ff.
4. Gal. 1:15-17.
5. II Cor. 12:1-13.

been made to Peter? But, in case it was still in its oral form, it would thereby have been at a serious disadvantage. Was it some such necessity as that of meeting the written authority of Paul's letters that precipitated the writing of the reference to the Keys? With the evidence at hand one can go no farther than to point out the possibility, but the point is an interesting one, and it at least throws some light on the significance of function for the origin and development of an authoritative Scripture. The Judaizers had their authority already at hand; the Hellenists in so far as they could not appeal to it built up a new one. Whatever may have been the circumstances of its origin, it is certain that this passage functioned in Rome in later days, and that it was one which could meet a similar claim on the part of the Mithraists to a divinity bearing the key of heaven[1].

(d) The Old Testament and the language of worship. Another phase of the life of the primitive Christians in which sacred books functioned was worship. The language of Scripture, already familiar, was the natural vehicle for the ascription of praise to Christ. This is shown by the Magnificat of Luke 1:46-55 as compared with First Samuel 2:1-10, the Benedictus in Luke 1:68-79, which is couched in regular Old Testament language[2], and the Nunc Dimittis in Luke 2:29-32, which conceives of salvation as a revelation to the nations in accordance with Isaiah 42:6 and 49:6. The writer of the book of Revelation expressed the worship of the heavenly choruses in language suffused with the spirit of the Old Testament--the celestial rendering of the liturgy of God's holy ones upon earth[3]. The language of prayer also fell naturally into that of Scripture[4],

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1. Die Schriften des Neuen Testaments, neu übersetzt und für die Gegenwart erklärt, Göttingen 1917, Vol. I, p. 333.
2. Cf. especially Lk. 1:76-79 with Is. 40:3 and Mal. 3:1; Mal. 4:2; Is. 9:2; 58:8; 60:1; Num. 24:17.
3. Cf. Rev. 4:8 with Is. 6:3, and note the reference to the Song of Moses in connection with the Song of the Lamb in Rev. 15:3-4.
4. Acts 4:23-31; cf. Ps. 2:1-2.

and that too in cases where the worshippers were filled with the Holy Spirit[1]. Among the Corinthians the man who spoke in a tongue had to compete with his neighbor who had a psalm[2], and Paul himself while speaking in the power of the Spirit appealed to Scripture to authenticate the higher mystery of which he was in possession, but of which he could speak only among full-grown Christians[3]. One more example may be given from Hebrews 1, where the effectiveness of the writer's argument for the superiority of the Son depends upon more than his reader's casual familiarity with the Old Testament passages quoted in its support, and where on the other hand its force is evident at once in the light of the liturgical use of the passages.

(e) The function of sacred books in emphasizing the necessity and significance of baptism. As in the service of prayer and praise, so also in the development of the conception of the sacraments Scripture functioned for the Christians. The primitive conception of baptism seems to have been the result of the fusion of two ideas: first, a baptism of the Spirit direct and without water, which replaced that of John, and second, a baptism of water unto repentance as practised by the Jews, more especially among ascetic groups and in the proselyting activities of the Dispersion. With this fusion came also the sacramental significance as emphasized by Paul. At first the gift of the Spirit did not depend on baptism in water[4], and the thought of the Spirit as the source of new powers and special activities predominated; but with the adherence to Christianity of

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1. Acts 4:31.
2. I. Cor. 14:26.
3. I Cor. 2:6-10.
4. Mk. 1:8; Mt. 3:11; Lk. 3:16; Acts 1:5;2:1-4; 10:44-48; 11:15-16.

some of the disciples of John[1] and of proselytes of the Dispersion among whom there is some evidence that baptism as washing with religious significance was practised[2], the already existent significance of repentance and purification from sin came to be attached to it. This at once carried with it considerable of the Old Testament background[3], inasmuch as the call to repentance was emphasized by the recital of Israel's past history[4]. Meanwhile constant emphasis was laid upon the necessity of being baptized into the name of Jesus[5], and the development of the sacramental conception had begun.

When this interpretation had been arrived at there was still greater need for the warnings of Scripture. The following example from I Corinthians 10:1-13 will illustrate: Paul reminded his readers that although all the Israelites had accepted baptism as followers of Moses, God was not well pleased with some of them and overthrew them in the wilderness. Later when it was desirable to enforce the moral significance of baptism as over against its mere physical form, the rite was likened to the ark in the days of Noah[6].

Thus the chief function of the Old Testament in the development of baptism was to emphasize its necessity; in the nature of the case the contribution of Scripture to the actual content of the rite was much less. This very fact, however, was all the more important for the development of new sacred books in addition to the Old Testament, for the directions and discussions concerning baptism which were an integral part of the epistles of Paul, and the reference of the rite to John the

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1. Acts 19:1-7 gives an example.
2. Orac. Sibyl. IV 162-192.
3. Mk. 1:1-4; Mt. 3:1-3; Lk. 3:4-6.
4. Acts 2:22-42; 13:13-43.
5. Acts 19:1-7.
6. I Pet. 3:20-21.

Baptist, and to the example and command of Jesus himself, by the writers of the gospels made their writings, rather than the Old Testament, the source of authority.

(f) Old Testament types and New Testament teachings as aids to the realization of the sacramental union in the Lord's Supper. The relation of the Lord's Supper to the Old Testament was quite similar to that of baptism, although it furnished more occasion for the use of the older sacred books. In the interpretation of this sacrament as also in the case of baptism there was the fusion of two ideas: first, a meal in memory of Jesus' martyr death prefiguring the new messianic banquet to be celebrated when the kingdom came[1], and second, the means of a realistic union between the believer and Christ. Here again, as in baptism, the latter conception of mystical fellowship and union with Christ as Savior-god came to predominate, and there was the same necessity for an aid to making it more real. It was therefore a sphere of religious life in which the written word was useful, and consequently when the Old Testament was no longer adequate, it called forth new books which in the course of time were to become sacred. As the years passed the written records of the sufferings of Jesus became more and more necessary to an understanding of the full significance of the rite on the part of the celebrants. The power of the name of Jesus also reacted to make the new writings sacred; and since the two sacraments had been the only visible embodiment of the Church for more than three decades after the death of Jesus, it was only natural that they too should become potent factors in the process. The Fourth Gospel with its discourse on the Bread of Life is an example.

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1. S. J. Case, The Evolution of Early Christianity, Chicago 1914, p.340.

The influence of the Old Testament, however, is not to be underestimated. A glance at the typology called forth by the Lord's Supper will make this evident at once. The manna and the water which had been miraculously supplied to the Israelites in the wilderness was taken as a type of the Eucharist[1]. The very term "New Covenant" depended upon contrast with the Old as embodied in the Old Testament[2]; indeed it was conceived after the spirit of Jeremiah[3], and the ideals of the Isaian Servant Songs were factors in the interpretation of the suffering of Jesus and of his mediation as Christ for men. Even Paul with all his emphasis upon sacramental union with the glorified, mediating, and life-giving Christ could speak of him as "our Passover". Thus because the Old Testament was richer in types suited to describe the Lord's Supper than in types suitable for baptism, it was able to contribute more to the developing body in which the former ultimately clothed itself.

(g) The interaction between Scripture and the organized church in the administrative and practical phases of the Christian life. One further phase of the development from the pneumatic to the didactic type of Christianity needs to be considered, viz. the Old Testament as a factor in the administrative and practical activities of the primitive church. The picture given in Acts reveals at the outset a society whose subjective sense was one of guidance by the Spirit, and whose objective measures were shaped by it as its circumstances demanded. The temporary experiment with communism was made possible by the sense of participation in one common Spirit[4], and the sin of Ananias and Sapphira against this

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1. I.Cor. 10:3-4; Jn. 6:51-58.
2. II Cor. 3:1-11.
3. Jer. 31:31-34.
4. Acts 2:43-47; 3:32-36.

fellowship was both revealed and punished by the Spirit[1]. The Seven were men full of the Spirit[2]; by the Spirit's direction also Barnabas and Saul were later chosen for their special missionary work[3]. Missionaries on their journies were guided by the Holy Spirit[4], or by the Spirit of Jesus[5]. Under inspiration of the Spirit a famine was predicted by Agabus and measures were taken to relieve the suffering resulting from it[6].

Paul likewise thought of the Christian society as Spirit-filled. He had received his gospel independently from man and directly through a revelation of Jesus Christ[7]. He lived by the Spirit and by the Spirit he proposed to be guided[8]. The same freedom from the law which he enjoyed he was willing to grant to others[9]. Having Jesus Christ within him, each individual was to test himself to see whether he was holding to the faith[10]. In such matters as the observance of special days each man was to be fully convinced in his own mind[11]. And yet no man lived only to himself[12] but to the Lord. Those who possessed the Spirit of Jesus he expected to be automatically "of the same mind one with another"[13] -- a characteristic Pauline phrase. In Christ there was neither Jew nor Greek, bond nor free, male nor female[14]. "Because there is one loaf", he wrote to the Corinthians[15], "we, many as we are, are one body, for we all share the one loaf". In one Spirit all had been baptised into one body[16], the members of which, like the members of the human physical body, were each to perform their several functions, basing their claims to leadership on the service thus rendered[17].

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1. Acts 5:1-11.
2. Acts 6:1-6.
3. Acts 13:1-3.
4. Acts 13:4.
5. Acts 16:7.
6. Acts 11:21-30.
7. Gal. 1:12.
8. Gal. 5:25.
9. Gal. 5:13.
10. II Cor. 13:5.
11. Romans 14:5
12. Romans 14:7
13. Rom.15:5; Phil.4:2.
14. Gal. 3:21.
15. I Cor.12:13.
16. I Cor.12:13.
17. I Cor. 4:1.

Such, theoretically, was the ideal; but practically it was hard to achieve. Consequently, as the purely ecstatic phase of early Christianity passed into the period of a developing organization, appeal to a more tangible authority in written form was inevitable. Indeed, even in the period reflected by the writer of the book of Acts, and in the work of Paul himself, the Old Testament played a considerable part. For example, the authentication of the action taken in choosing Matthias to take the place of Judas was found in Psalms 69:25 and 109:8.[1] In agreement with the action of Peter in using gentile material in building up the church Amos 9:11-12 was cited[2]. For Paul the voice of that uprightness which sprang from faith was the very same which spoke in Deuteronomy 30:11-14: "The word is nigh thee in thy mouth and in thy heart"[3]. The command to love one's neighbor as himself received added significance by virtue of the fact that it could be considered the fulfillment of the whole Mosaic law[4]. As applied concretely in the matter of exercising judgment on one's neighbor, this law of love was further reinforced by reference to the prophecy of Isaiah 45:23[5]. The strong, following the example of Christ, who, as it was written in Psalm 69:9, did not please himself, ought to bear the infirmities of the weak[6]. The philanthropic measures urged upon the Corinthians in accordance with this principle were also grounded on Scripture[7]. In short, Paul's conception of the Scriptures was that "everything that was written in earlier times was written for our instruction, so that by being steadfast, and through the encouragement the Scriptures give, we might hold our hope fast"[8].

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1. Acts 1:15-26.
2. Acts 15:14-18.
3. Rom. 10:5-8.
4. Rom. 13:8-10.
5. Rom. 14:10-12.
6. Rom. 15: 1-3.
7. II Cor. 8:15; Ex. 16:18; 9:9; Ps. 112:9.
8. Rom. 15:4.

With respect to man's social duties the Old Testament commandments constituted the minimum requirements only. Men like the rich young ruler, who felt that they had observed all of them, were reminded that they still lacked something of complete self-surrender to the Lord Jesus[1]. Similarly, the old laws relating to murder, adultery, and revenge had to be extended[2], and in matters of dispute between Christians the church was to exercise a mediating function[3]. In each of these instances the extension was made in the name of Jesus. To his authority, reinforced by reliance upon the Spirit, were referred the rules governing the ideal missionary[4]. This new growth of the moral law, once written, was in its turn to serve as the source of authority governing the social relations of the Christians; but meanwhile the Old Testament not only served in the interval during which Christianity was growing to a point where it could produce its own authoritative books: it entered into the making of the New Law. While the Old Testament presented only a minimum requirement, it was required. The procedure just referred to in matters of dispute among Christians is an illustration of the manner in which the principles of the Old Testament became component parts of the New: the exhortation to reprove the offender is based on Leviticus 19:17, and the regulation requiring the presence of two or three witnesses accords with the rule of Deuteronomy 19:15. Again, the judgment of those who refused to heed the missionary message was contrasted with the classical example of Sodom and Gomorrah, while the fate of those who had failed to discharge their social duties was to be determined by the Son of Man—himself an Old Testament figure. The Old Testament affinity of the scene is found in Ezekiel 34.

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1. Mk. 10:21; Mt. 19:21; Lk. 18:22.
2. Mt. 5:22-26, 28-32, 38-42.
3. Mt. 18:15-20; see especially (verse 19.
4. Mt. 10:1-23.

As the churches in the more important metropolitan centers of the Empire came to a consciousness of their potentialities, and as they moved forward to assume the aggressive leadership demanded of them in the practical affairs of their common life, they found the scriptures of especial value in securing the confidence requisite to an enthusiastic response to their efforts. The outstanding example of this is the Epistle to the Hebrews. Its author, writing to the very practical minded Roman church, and to a generation of apathetic Christians in the last decade of the first century, to whom the manifestation of the Spirit was more a memory of the past than a present experience, found the Old Testament ready at hand to use as a foil with which to give his readers and hearers the proper appreciation of the supreme value of their religion. The whole book is a series of comparisons with Old Testament types which alternate with and give driving power to a parallel series of keen practical thrusts. A single example of this taken from 12:14-13:6 will suffice. Esau profanely selling his birthright became the type of those who, still more immoral and godless, were in danger of falling short of the grace of God; the awful terrors of Mt. Sinai were but to remind Christians of the still more solemn assembly of all God's elder sons enrolled as citizens in heaven; if the Old Testament worthies had angels as their guests without knowing it, how much the more ought Christians to practise hospitality; if the Psalmist could say, "The Lord is my helper; I will not be afraid: what can man do to me?"[1], the Christian had all the greater reason to be free from the love of money and content with what he had.

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1. Ps. 118:6.

If Hebrews shows the pressure brought to bear upon the church in Rome to seize its opportunities for leadership, the First Epistle of Peter shows that church in action in response to the challenge. Similar to Hebrews is the writer's use of Scripture in motivating the practical life of the Christians. Thus, for example, in order to emphasize his appeal for a forgiving and harmonious spirit among them, he quoted Psalm 34:12-16.[1]

When the writer of the sermon known as the Epistle of James wished to picture his ideal of the perfect Christian, he drew heavily upon the Old Testament. He insisted that the commandments formed an organic whole in the supreme law of love[2], and that faith must find its highest expression in good deeds. His argument turned upon Abraham the friend of God[3], in whom the Scripture was fulfilled that said, "Abraham had faith in God, and it was credited to him as uprightness"[4], and upon Rahab, who had saved from detection the spies sent by Joshua. To press home the necessity of maintaining a sharp distinction between the Christian society and the world he asked his hearers whether the Scripture meant nothing when it said, "He yearns jealously over the Spirit he has put in our hearts"; and in urging humility and the spirit of democracy within the Christian society he rested upon Proverbs 3:34 and Leviticus 19:18.[5] The endurance of the prophets and the patience of Job, which were commonplace in early Christian thought, were the examples of Christian steadfastness[6]. In the matter of taking oaths the words of Jesus[7] were to be regulatory[8]. The style in which the whole of this epistle (sermon)

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1. I Pet. 3:8-12.
2. James 2:8-12.
3. Is. 41:8 and II Chron. 20:7.
4. James 2:23.
5. James 4:6; 3:8.
6. James 5:10-11.
7. Mt. 5:37.
8. James 5:12.

is written is a combination of the characteristics of the Jewish Wisdom literature and the Cynic-Stoic diatribe. Its author was a Christian teacher keenly alive to the moral laxity of the Christian churches, and hence in that respect he was a true successor to the old Hebrew prophet; but at the same time the fact must be emphasized that he combined with this prophetic spirit that which was best in the Greek.

Another point must be noted with reference to the Epistle of James. In Part One of this study the rabbinical method of justifying departures from observances no longer practicable was set forth. Then it was shown how a similar result could be accomplished by the use of allegory by those who found good things in Hellenistic thought and life. These two methods of deducing and authenticating what was new were, however, not the only possibilities. A third method was simply to state the practice or the principle that had been found desirable without referring it to what had gone before, whether the precedent were written or oral, and then either allowing it to stand on its own axiomatic qualities or appealing to the realization of it in the experience of the Christian church. The first of these alternatives, that is, the self-evidencing power of truth, is abundantly illustrated in the Epistle of James, in combination, of course, with the use of Scripture in those cases where it quite obviously applied. In hermas, where it is still more evident, the result is often so to obscure the allusions to Scripture as to make it impossible to localize them, however one may feel that the author must have had them in mind.

The second alternative, namely, appeal to the Christian experience which had now a long enough history back of it to make it effective as a

validating source, is especially prominent in the Pastoral Epistles. The formula introducting the appeals is frequently, "Faithful is the saying"[1]. That this was part and parcel of the creedal development at the turn of the first century is shown by the confident expression of the writer of First Timothy that there could be no denial of the divine mystery as expressed in the confession,

> "He was revealed in the flesh,
> He was vindicated by the Spirit,
> He was seen by the angels,
> He was proclaimed among the heathen,
> He was believed in throughout the world,
> He was taken up into glory"[2].

In each instance except in I Timothy 3:1 the formula, "Faithful is the saying," is used with reference to the specific Christian message, and is deliberately made to stand in sharp contrast to such matters as "foolish controversies, pedigrees, strife, and wrangles about the Law"[3], and "worldly fictions and old wives' tales"[4]. The new religion is here seen coming to a consciousness of its own prerogatives. It was a consciousness due not only to the new authority of the words and deeds of Jesus,[5] and to the immediate presence of the Spirit, but also in addition it was now possible to appeal to the worthy example of such a missionary hereo as Paul, who had definitely claimed the inspiration of the Spirit. This appeal to apostolic authority was now all the more necessary in that false teachers were creeping in[6], who were themselves appealing to the older books. The Christian writings, therefore, which could be considered as embodying in expanded form the confession just quoted

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1. II Tim. 2:11; Tit. 3:8; I Tim. 1:15;3:1;4:9.
2. II Tim. 3:16.
3. Tit. 3:9.
4. I Tim. 4:7.
5. Mk. 1:27; Mt. 5:22, 28, 34, 38, 44.
6. I Tim. 4:1-5.

from First Timothy 3:16, were now rapidly acquiring prestige and canonical authority. For example, in the name of Paul the writer of First Timothy gave a whole series of directions for conduct in "the church of the living God, the pillar and foundation of the truth[1]. The organized church was now assuming the prerogative of passing judgment upon the sacred books, and, as in the parallel case of organized Judaism, it was maintained that no prophecy in Scripture could be understood by one's own powers[2].

III. Scripture and the missionary enterprise: preaching and teaching.

From the beginning of the missionary enterprise it had been necessary for the Christian leaders to interpret the Scriptures in a specifically Christian sense. That is, they had to give a new explanation of them by adding the story of Jesus. For if it was true that the Scriptures had contributed much to the tradition about Jesus, it was also true that one reading them without a knowledge of him who was the Christ could not understand them. Such was the case of the Ethiopian Eunuch whom Philip found reading Isaiah 53:7f.[3]; and Apollos, who, notwithstanding his skill in the use of the Scriptures, his zeal and painstaking teaching about Jesus, and his confident speaking in the Synagogue, was taken home by Aquila and Priscilla to have the way of God explained to him more accurately[4].

The interpretation of Scripture was thus a social as well as an individual matter, a conception which was, as has been shown, also

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1. I Tim. 3:15.
2. II Pet. 1:21.
3. Acts 8:32.
4. Acts 18:24-28.

characteristic of rabbinical education. That it should have influenced the early Christians is not surprising in view of the fact that they took over from the Judaism of the Dispersion its methods and materials of missionary propaganda.

Looking forward to the day when Jahweh would be king over all the earth[1], that section of the Jewish people which had caught the spirit of universalism proceded to declare his glory among the nations[2]. In doing so they utilized every allowable means, including the Sibyl, Orpheus, Hesiod and Phocylides. They did not expect, of course, that the gentiles would fully attain the ideal of the "Way of God", but they did expect and urge them to climb towards it by the "Way of the World" (Derek erez). By the Way of the World they meant the morality and custom in the social, economic, hygienic, aesthetic and ethical relationships of life which commend themselves to the universal conscience of mankind. They were the commandments which, if they had not been written, would have had to be written[3]. The prohibitions which commanded universal assent were those against murder, licentiousness, idolatry, stealing, and eating raw meat of a living animal; on the positive side were obedience to authority and keeping the Divine Name holy[4].

In propaganda proverbs, parables and tales of ethical content were pressed into service, and lists of virtues and vices were drawn up[5]. Psalm 34 was especially useful to the missionary preacher and teacher: verse 11, "Come ye children, hearken unto me: I will teach you the fear of Jahweh", became stereotyped in catechization[6]. The value of this Psalm

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1. Zech. 14:9.
2. Is. 66:19.
3. Sifra Lev. 18, 4, p. 40; cited by G. Klein, Der älteste christliche Katechismus und die Jüdische Propaganda-Literatur, Berlin 1909, p.64.
4. Klein, p. 64. 5. Klein, p.94-100. 6. Klein, p.139.

is illustrated by the story of the trader who, as he peddled his wares from house to house, cried out, "Who wants the spice of life[1]". When asked what he meant, he called for the book of Psalms and pointed to Psalm 34:13ff.[2]: "What man is he that desireth life, and that loveth many days that he may see good? Keep thy tongue from evil, and thy lips from speaking guile. Depart from evil and do good; seek peace and pursue it".

The possible influence of Psalm 34 on the Christian missionary message to those already familiar with it can be seen in Romans 12. In the first place, verses 4-10 comprised a message of hope and comfort to the more humble class of people who were first attracted to the new religion. Many a man confronted with the uncertainties attendant upon migration, whether forced or voluntary, to some strange and distant city, or distracted by the innumerable fears to which the ancient world was subject could find in them courage and comfort. Now it was precisely the mercy of God which constituted the basis of Paul's appeal to the Romans to offer their bodies a living sacrifice[3].

Moreover, the emphasis of the Psalm was upon the moral. Paul likewise had in mind a rational worship. Walking in the Derek erez, that is, in obedience to those laws necessary to life itself, he conceived to be a process of transformation of attitudes, so that one might develop a feeling for what was good, pleasing, and perfect[4]. The admonition of the Psalmist was to "depart from evil and do good"[5]; Paul said, "You must hate what is wrong and hold to what is right"[6]. Likewise

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1. יראת יי
2. Klein, p. 137.
3. Rom. 12:1.
4. Rom. 12:2.
5. Ps. 34:14.
6. Rom. 12:9.

the ideal of the Psalm, "Seek peace and pursue it"[1], was an excellent preparation for Paul's more intimate and specific "If possible for your part, live peaceably with everybody; and the conviction of the Psalmist[2] that "They that hate the righteous shall be condemned" could well dispose Paul's readers to leave vengeance to God, a principle, however, which, he himself based on Deuteronomy 32:25. While there is in Romans 12 no explicit quotation from Psalm 34, there is just such a correspondence between the two as one would expect from a Christian Jew writing to Jewish Christians familiar with the Old Testament hymnbook.

The possibility is increased by the fact that the writer of First Peter actually quoted from this Psalm. The coincidence is all the more striking when it is recognized that he was writing to those of the Dispersion in Asia. "Oh taste and see that the Lord is good[3]" had been the missionary invitation of the Psalmist; and the peoples of the Dispersion had responded, so that now the writer of First Peter could admonish them to free themselves from all malice, deceit, hypocrisy, envy and slander, and to crave the pure spiritual milk that would make them grow up to salvation, inasmuch as they had <u>tasted of the Lord's kindness</u>[4]. In like manner he quoted Psalm 34 as his basis of appeal for harmony, love, and forbearance among them.

Thus while the transition from the ecstatic-revelatory to the didactic-interpretive of Christianity is to be viewed as a development, it must not be forgotten that these interests, together with the necessary methods and materials for meeting them were in existence side by side from the beginning. In the crucible of the first Christian century the

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1. Verse 14.
2. Ps. 34:21.
3. Ps. 34:8.
4. I Pet. 2:1-3.

two were fused into a new alloy superior both in beauty and in strength to either ethics or mysticism alone. It was a process of mutual adaptation[1], the history of which has been traced with respect to the founding of the church, to worship and the sacraments, and to the organization and the administrative and practical aspects of the Christian life. In each request the discussion will have made evident the educational function of both the Jewish and the developing Christian Scriptures on the process. Two further points, however, reamin to be noticed, namely, the function of sacred books in the education of children and the use made of them by teachers.

The immediate stress of the eschatological expectation naturally acted as an inhibitive force with respect to the education of children. Its effect, however, must not be pressed to the point of ignoring the fact that the first adherents of the new movement were Jews who had grown up in the educational traditions of their race. It is worthy of note that the later interest which developed the birth and childhood narratives of Jesus included the account of his presence as a precocious boy of twelve in the temple asking questions and answering the teachers there. Included in a passage admirably adapted to family instruction was the injunction, "Children, always obey your parents, for that is commendable in Christians[2]". It found its concrete example in the life of Jesus, who went back with his parents to Nazareth and obeyed them[3]. Jesus' own attitude towards children also became the precedent and the authority for determining their place in the kingdom of God[4]. He had not only received them, but he had rebuked those who had no time for them. In fact, he had gone farther than this by making certain

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1. Cf. I Thess. 5:19, "Quench not the Spirit".
2. Col. 3:20; cf. Eph. 6:1.
3. Lk. 2:51.
4. Mk. 10:14; Mt. 19:14; Lk. 18:16.

characteristics of the child the condition of entrance for adults[1]. By the close of the century the church had come to perceive the advantage of having leaders who like Timothy had known the Scriptures from childhood[2].

Scripture was also useful in inculcating the proper respect for the teacher. The place of the teacher, whatever his official position and title, was always a responsible one[3]. Preaching and teaching elders were to be considered as deserving twice as much as they received: this was reinforced by reference to Deuteronomy 25:4, "Thou shalt not muzzle the ox when he treadeth out the corn"[4], a passage which Paul by allegory had applied to his apostleship[5]. The necessary qualifications of a teacher were correspondingly high[6], and the office of teacher was to be restricted to men on the ground of the status of woman as set forth in the account of the creation[7].

IV. Experience, speculation, and Scripture.

Especial caution was necessary in passing judgment upon teachers and their doctrines. At the outset there had occurred a sharp conflict as to the nature of the criteria to be applied. The Judaizers in Galatia contended for the law of the Old Testament. Opposing them, Paul contended vigorously for the authority of the Spirit[8], although he by no means rejected the authority of the Scriptures, but contrariwise used them to reinforce his message whenever he found material in them which commended itself to him.

The Judaistic controversy, however, was but a passing phase of the development of early Christianity. Much more important was the necessity under which the new movement found itself of coming to terms with its

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1. Mk. 10:13-16; Lk. 18:15-17; Mt. 19:13-15; 18:3.
2. II Tim. 3:14-15.
3. Jas. 3:1.
4. I Tim. 5:17.
5. I Cor. 9:9.
6. II Tim. 2:2.
7. I Tim. 2:12-13.
8. Gal. 5:16, 25.

environing thought world. Most dangerous of all were those tendencies of the Graeco-Roman world which aimed at higher Gnosis or hidden metaphysical knowledge. The danger consisted in the pursuit of the line of least resistance, which tended to express itself often in loose living rather than in the strenuous way of moral conquest. Moreover, it threatened to chill the glow of enthusiasm springing from a vivid impression of the life and personality of Jesus as he had actually existed upon earth. Against this the Christian teachers and preachers set themselves strenuously[1].

For examples of both the good and the bad, the Old Testament readily served as ammunition in the consequent polemic. Balaam and Jezebel, Cain and Korah, and the cities of Sodom and Gomorrah aptly characterized movements and their representatives which ran counter to the central emphasis of Christianity[2]. On the other hand the rescue of upright Lot, whose soul had been tormented day by day by what he saw of the lawless actions of the inhabitants of the doomed cities, gave assurance to those who felt themselves the faithful few in the midst of general wickedness that the Lord knew how to rescue God-fearing people from trial and punish wrongdoers[3]. Like Noah, the preacher of righteousness would be saved. In urging steadfastness in the midst of the corrupting influences of the world, the writer of Second Peter applied the Proverb, "A dog returns to what he has vomited up, and a sow that has washed goes back to wallow in the mire[4]", to those who had again become entangled in their former errors.

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1. Cf. Gal. 1:8-9; Col. 2:8-15; Phil. 3:17-21; Mk. 13:21-22; Mt. 24:11; Acts 20:28-30; Rev. 2:2, 6, 14-15, 20-24; I Jn. 2:18-24; 4:1-3; II Tim. 3:1-9; II Pet. 2:1-22.
2. Jude 5-13.
3. II Pet. 2:7-9.
4. Cf. Prov. 26:11 with II Pet. 2:22.

In the end, these moral and speculative aberrations (it must be remembered that such speculation was often merely the justification of existing practices or habits) were left behind by the ongoing Catholic movement. The victory, however, was not altogether, or even mainly, achieved by exclusion. The Christian movement was forced to reckon with the Graeco-Roman philosophies and come to terms with them. The competition which the Christian teachers and evangelists had to meet was that of men who made their way into people's houses taking captive "silly women laden with sins" who were "ever learning but never able to come to a knowledge of the truth"[1]. Something more than mere denunciation was necessary. If the adherents of "false" teachings thus went about catechizing in people's houses, it was necessary that the "true" teachers do the same. In the Greek world the method of propagating religion by traveling about and reading to people in their homes was one of long standing[2], and that it was practised in the Christian era is shown by the reference in Hermas Vision II 4. The custom throws a flood of light on the statement of the Fourth Gospel[3], "There were many other signs that Jesus showed before his disciples which are not recorded in this book. But these have been recorded that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that through believing you might have life as his followers".

Here was a book capable of functioning to persuade men of the truth of the new religion. But it represented far more than a mere clothing of the Christian message in the language of Hellenistic philosophy; for

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1. II Tim. 3:6-7.
2. Demosthenes, Pro Corona, ed. Butcher, sec. 259-60; Plato, Rep. 364 E.
3. Jn. 20:30-31.

while Graeco-Roman philosophy was being Christianized, Christianity was itself taking up not only the language of that philosophy but much of its content as well. The two were mutually interactive, and the resulting combination was a product of the same tendency which resulted in Neo-Platonism, and back of it were the same driving forces which had produced the system of Philo. The writer, and the public to which he preached, and for which he wrote, had not only found much in Hellenism which was true and useful to them, but they were also a part of that life.

On the other hand, belief in Jesus the Christ, the Son of God, had given them religious satisfactions such as they had not been able to find elsewhere. The very title "Christ", however, carried with it a significance which to them was not easily intelligible apart from the study of the Jewish sacred Scriptures. Nor would even these have been sufficient apart from the Synoptic records of the life of Jesus, the authority of which, although not yet great enough to render them immune from changes, was nevertheless sufficient to cause them to be incorporated in a record intended to serve the religious needs of those who were in search of eternal life. The Fourth Gospel was thus the result of a combination of religious experience, philosophy, and Scripture into a new world view based on the principle of Love in Christ Jesus, the Son of God. These three mutually authenticated each other.

With increasing clearness in the Gospel of John and in the later books of the New Testament there can be seen the influence of Graeco-Roman attitudes towards and use of sacred books. A detailed consideration of this influence is now in order.

In Part One it was shown how the Old Testament, which had itself been produced to meet human religious needs, had become sacred and had been canonized according to the capacity of its several books to function in the midst of the stresses resulting from the on-going movement of Jewish life. In that life sacred books functioned as sources of wisdom, of courage and hope for the future, and of instruction as to the means of securing salvation. Rabbinical Judaism stressed the will of God, which was revealed in Scripture, and found the sacred writings a means of education in the Synagogue and of worship at the national festivals, a protection against suffering, a source of assurance as to the Age to come, and an eternal and unanswerable apologetic. Hellenistic Judaism faced the problem of maintaining the national spirit in the midst of undeserved suffering, and found sacred books of value in understanding the universe and in developing the self-control necessary in an age of fusing philosophical and ethical systems and competing nationalities.

Such was the Jewish factor in the production and use of sacred books as it operated in emergent Christianity. Its effect on the new religious movement exhibits two mutually interactive phases, one mediate, the other immediate. The mediating factor was the personality of Jesus, who drew heavily from Scripture for the inspiration and conception of his mission and his conviction and assurance for the future Kingdom of God, thus furnishing the nexus between himself and the attribution of Scripture quotations to him which was necessitated by the circumstances of his followers in the period of gospel formation.

Because each generation of the followers of Jesus had the Scriptures at hand for itself, these sacred writings were able to function also

immediately. They were first employed in the interests of eschatology and to vindicate ecstatic experiences and activities. Then came the transition to the didactic type of Christianity. In the organized church Scripture became the language of worship; it emphasized the significance of baptism and made more real the sacramental union in the Lord's Supper, and its guidance was of great value in the administrative and practical life of the church. Finally, in the missionary enterprise, and in coping with heretical tendencies, the sacred writings were employed to emphasize the danger of faltering and apostasy, and the corresponding reward for steadfastness; and when the Christians found it agreeable as well as necessary to be inclusive of elements from Hellenistic thought and life, Scripture served to justify the procedure alike to those whose ancestry or sympathies were primarily Jewish, as to non-Jews who had not found in their own religion the elements which made for a completely satisfying life. From time to time in the course of this development, the Old and recognized Scriptures had been found inadequate, and new books were written, which, when possessed of the capacity to function for a longer or shorter period of time, and in sufficiently varied localities and circumstances, depending upon the intensity of need and effectiveness of application thereto, were in turn venerated as sacred and canonized.

Necessarily, the Graeco-Roman element was a vital factor in the process. While the differences between the Jewish and Gentile habits of belief and practice in religion have often been exaggerated in the interest of polemics and special theories of history, there still remains a contribution specifically Graeco-Roman which must be reckoned

with in order to reach a complete understanding of the function of sacred books in the early history of Christianity, and of the causes which led to the formation of the New Testament canon.

The significance of this contribution can best be set forth by raising and attempting to answer two questions. The first is, What is the explanation of the extraordinary attractiveness and spread of the Jewish Scriptures among the Greeks and Romans? To take this fact for granted, and as not calling for explanation, is to miss the key to the solution, not only of many subsidiary questions, but even of the man problem of the New Testament canon itself. The Old Testament, once accepted, maintained its position of power in the face of formidable opposition such as that of Marcion, and the second question accordingly is, How did this come about, and moreover, Why was a New Testament Scripture formed in addition? The question, Why a New Testament at all? has, of course, often been raised, but attempts to answer it, being occupied mainly with the task of cataloging the evidence for the existence of the canon, or with the relation of the heresies combatted by the ancient church to its history, need to be supplemented by a consideration of the actual use of sacred books during that period.

Part Three: Graeco-Roman Elements

CHAPTER VII

THE PROPHETIC FUNCTION OF SACRED BOOKS IN THE GRAECO-ROMAN WORLD.

I. The urge of the West for assurance as to the future.

To gain a correct understanding of the attitude of the Graeco-Roman world towards its sacred books, it is necessary to make a mental reconstruction of the world of fear and anxiety in which they lived. The ever present threat of invasion and conquest, the endless succession of wars with their civil and social upheavals, together with recurrent famines and pestilences, all of them foretold and foreshadowed by prodigies in sky and earth and underworld, kept men in a constant state of high nervous tension.

Especial effort is required on the part of one who is accustomed to think of nature as governed by law, and hence as dependable, to realize the state of mind of the ancients. For the most part they had no conception of secondary causes, but instead, they referred every natural phenomenon to the direct activity of the appropriate God or Gods. Often the activity of the Deity was governed by caprice, or it was arbitrary, or still worse, it was the result of the effort of one God or group of Gods to get the better of their fellows, so that the inhabitants of earth, being inextricably and inevitably involved in their quarrels, had, even though innocent, to suffer for them. Usually, however, misfortune or disaster were associated with ritual or moral or political shortcomings.

The margin of food supply being always narrow, the wrath of the Gods if it happened to be directed against the farmers was particularly dreaded. According to Pliny the Elder, the plagues of locusts which came from Africa to infest Italy were known as the pest of the wrath of the Gods[1]. Unusual occurrences in nature were readily exaggerated by the superstitious and nerve-wracked populace. So simple a matter as the condensation of moisture on the metal surface of sacred shields or images was especially terrible; for, in the case of an image of a God, it was interpreted to mean that the God was uneasy because he had some communication to make to man[2]. In an incredibly short space of time stories arising in a crisis grew into tales of the marvellous, and being passed on to the next generation, commanded still greater credulity in new times of terror. Even matter of fact treatises on nature or history were naively interlarded with them. Pliny the elder gave his readers one such prodigy which he assured them went beyond anything that had ever been heard: In his own time a whole olive orchard had crossed a public highway and had exchanged places with the ploughed fields there! It was due to nothing less than the catastrophe of such a reign as that of Nero.[3]

Plutarch put the matter thus: "He that dreads divine powers dreads everything, the land, the sea, the air, the sky, the dark, the light, a sound, a silence, a dream"[4]. Rolling in filth, keeping Sabbaths, vile and abject in adorations, the prey of every fortune-

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1. Nat. Hist. XI, 104.
2. Lucian, Dea Syr. 10 and 36.
3. Nat. Hist. XVII, 243-5.
4. Plut., Of Superstition, 3; trans. W. W. Goodwin (reviser), Boston 1870, Vol. I, p. 170.

teller, vagrant, or witch, pale and trembling in his sacrifices and faltering in his prayers, blaming the Gods for his fate--such a man is worse than the atheists; for him there is no hope: even death offers no respite from his vain and foolish fears, for the gates of hell open themselves to reveal its gloomy darkness, peopled with ghastly specters, judges and tormentors, and filled with millions of miseries and woes[1].

Well known ancient writers like Plutarch were not alone in their protest against superstition. There is a papyrus fragment containing parts of three columns of a philosophical work apparently in the form of a letter[2]. It is not likely to have been written before the reign of Augustus; nor is it later than the middle of the first century A.D. Severely criticising the popular fear of the Gods, its writer protested, "For why, 'by Zeus', to use the vulgar phrase, do you fear them?".

And yet, extravagant as were these fears, they grew out of very real situations. Notwithstanding its magical element, the following third century prayer[3] reveals one of the fundamental forces which drove men to the Gods: "Unwearied Kok Kouk Koul, save Thais whom Tar... bare from every fever, whether it be tertian or quartan or daily or on alternate days, or by night, since I am ... Kok Kouk Koul". Indeed no problem of life was too trivial to be taken to the Gods for the assurance necessary to relieve the stress of uncertainty. The writer of a first century papyrus[4] inquired of the Lord Serapis Helios whether it was better for her son Phanias and his wife not to agree just then

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1. Of Superstition, 4.
2. Oxyr. Pap. ccxv, Grenfell and Hunt (G-H), II 1899, Vol. 2, p. 30.
3. Tebtunis Pap., G-H Vol. II (1907), p. 28, No. 275.
4. Oxyr. Pap. No. 1148, G-H Vol. VIII (1911), p. 249.

with his father, but to oppose him and make no contract. In another of the second century A.D., a certain Nice inquired from Zeus Helios whether it was expedient for her to buy from Tsarapion her slave also called Gaion[1]. A late third or early fourth century papyrus contained no less than ninety-two such questions to an oracle[2]. They illustrate the wide range of the demand of the world in which Christianity emerged and developed for an accurate knowledge of the future.

"Shall I receive the present?
Shall I remain where I am going?
Am I to be sold up?
Am I to obtain benefit from my friend?
Has it been granted to me to make a contract with another person?
Am I to be reconciled (?) with my offspring (?)?
Am I to get furlough (?)?
Shall I get the money?
Is the person abroad alive?
Am I to get profit by the transaction?
Is my property to be sold at auction?
Shall I find a means of selling?
Am I able to carry off what I am thinking of?
Am I to become a beggar?
Shall I take to flight?
Shall I become an ambassador (?)?
Am I to become a senator?
Is my flight to be stopped?
Am I to be divorced from my wife?
Have I been poisoned?
Am I to get my own?"

II. The prestige of the East.

The foregoing examples show the anxiety of the <u>individual</u> for assurance and guidance with respect to the future. The <u>collective</u> demand was correspondingly great. Obviously in an age when the safety of the state was conceived as absolutely dependent upon the correct

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1. Oxyr. Pap. No. 1149, G-H, l.c.
2. Oxyr. Pap. No. 1477, G-H Vol. XII (1916).

relations between it and the Gods, the social and political pressure which drove men to wrest from the unknown its secrets was enormous. In the midst of this pressure among the Greeks and the Romans (among the Romans in particular) there was at the same time a kind of spiritual vacuum into which there rushed from the East an assurance and faith which had back of it the prestige of centuries. The Persian religion, for example, was never more eagerly studied than in the first centuries of the Christian era. From thence came scores of oracles styled "Logia of Zoraster", or "Oracula Chaldaica sive Magica"[1]. Zoraster's name was synonymous with wisdom.

Egypt, too, being nearer at hand and more fortunate in the preservation of the remains of an immemorial past, had captivated the imagination of the younger peoples of the Empire, and drawn to its oracles those in search of knowledge of the will of the Gods. A first century letter from one Nearchus to Heliodorus, which describes a journey to Syene and the source of the Nile and a visit into Libya to the oracle where "Ammon utters oracles for all men"[2] will illustrate.

The reaction of Greece upon Rome embraced as one of its most important elements the influence of the Sibyls. Of the ten given by Lactantius the one most mentioned is the Erythraean in Ionia, which was generally identified with the Cumaean in Italy. That identification was due to the westward migration of eastern religions. One of its results was the introduction at Rome of the Sibylline Books, which for the history of the New Testament Canon are the most important of all the oracles.

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1. Darmsteter, SBE Vol. IV (1880), p. xii-xiii.
2. Brit. Mus. Papyr. Vol. III (1907), p. 205; Papyr. 854, l. 8.

III. The theory of inspiration.

Prophecy as given by the Sibyls was usually accompanied outwardly by distorted features, foaming mouth and frantic gestures, and was limited as to time and place. At the beginning of the Christian era considerable concern was manifested over the fact that oracles were ceasing to give answers. According to Plutarch Boeotia, which had formerly been famous throughout the world for its oracles, was in his day like a dried up fountain--a sad contrast to the times of the Persian and the Peloponnesian wars when such revelations had been frequent. A real problem was thus created for the Greeks and Romans, and many were becoming sceptical. He therefore gave especial attention to it in two treatises, "Why the oracles cease to give answers"[1] and "Wherefore the Pythian Priestess now ceases to deliver her oracles in verse"[2]. From these discussions the general theory of oracular inspiration as conceived by the more intelligent may be gathered.

First of all, certain conditions had to be fulfilled. One reason given for the fact that oracles were ceasing was that the world was wallowing in wickedness and the Gods therefore no longer suffered their oracles to be among men, a reason strikingly similar to that given by the Jews for the decline of prophecy among them. Another answer was that because the recent wars had depopulated Greece there was no longer need for so many oracles. In times of peace, moreover, men were not dependent upon them--except for trifles. Oracular responses were thus dependent upon the moral state of society and upon the demand for them.

More important as a determining factor were the physical conditions. The faculty of divining, although a native faculty of the human soul,

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1. Goodwin, Vol. IV, p. 3-64.
2. Goodwin, Vol. III, p. 69-103.

was liable to be obscured becuase of the association of the soul with a mortal body. The state of inspiration or enthusiasm could only be produced by a withdrawal from the present. It was comparatively rare, and the line of demarcation between beneficent frenzy and actual malady might easily be passed. It might be likened to a spring, or to the wind, and it might come through the air or in the water of some spring. Once mixed with the body, it produced an odd temperature and a strange inexpressible disposition of the soul, which, like heat, seemed to open certain pores that made a discovery of future things possible. As a process, the faculty of divining was the reverse of that of memory: just as the soul retained the past, so it anticipated the things to come, and that too, even more eagerly because of its natural sympathy for the future.

In any discussion of the natural causes, however, it had to be remembered that God was back of the prophecy: vapors and demons were merely his instruments. Vapors might fail in one place and spring up in another; demons were mortal and were merely superintendents of oracles: they might depart elsewhere and after a time return. In every case all was subject to the will of the God. As the sun to the eye, so was Apollo to the prophetic powers of the soul. Diety made use of the Pythian prophetess as the sun made use of the moon. Neither voice, nor sound, nor word, nor meter proceeded from the God, but from the woman. The part of the God was to present the vision and kindle in the soul a light to discover future events.

It followed theoretically that the literary form in which the oracular responses were cast was an indifferent matter. Yet considerable

concern was manifested by Plutarch to justify the change from poetry to prose on the part of the Pythian priestess. Moreover, the crude verses of the ancient oracles were an offence to cultivated literary taste, and those who believed in them were confronted by the difficulty of reconciling their defects with their reputed authorship by Apollo, the results of whose inspiration ought at least to have been equal to the works of Homer and Hesiod. Strangely enough, however, as it might seem today, their very defects and archaic nature constituted an important asset, and it seemed to many that those not given in poetic form were inferior, a notion against which Plutarch protested vigorously. The same difficulty had to be met by those who were attached to the Old Testament and the New Testament Scriptures, and the fact that the Greeks and the Romans were disposed to ignore the literary defects of their sacred books, and even to regard them as a claim to superiority, stood the Christians in good stead.

Fulfillment was, of course, their chief reliance for vindication, and on account of their ambiguous nature it was not difficult to show how they had come true even in the face of the objection that since there were an infinite number of accidents, the mere fact that what a prophet had said happened to come true was no proof that he had certain knowledge. The answer was that when in addition to the event itself, the time, place, manner, and means were also predicted, it was an absolute demonstration and an inspired discovery of what was to come to pass. As in the case of Jewish prophecy, history was often written in the future tense, so also among the Greeks and Romans prophecies were frequently <u>ex eventu</u>. The prophetess was even made to predict that she

would continue to prophesy in the future. According to Plutarch the first Sibyl that came to Delphi from Helicon was said to have "extolled herself as one that should never cease to prophesy even after her death; for that after her death she should make her abode in the moon, being metamorphosed into the face of that planet; that her voice and prognostications should always be heard in the air, intermixed with the winds and by them driven about from place to place; and that from her body should spring various plants, herbs, and fruits to feed the sacred victims, which should have sundry forms and qualities in their entrails, whereby men would be able to foretell all manner of events to come"[1].

All this is to be read as the backward projection of the means of prediction which were actually in use. With all nature immanent with potential prophecies, it was open to any one who happened to be in need to attempt to discover them, either unaided or by resorting to those to whom prophecy was a profession. As long as the predictions concerned individuals, the numerous prophets with their varieties of oracles did not present serious difficulty: the sifting processes of time and their incapacity to function eliminated the useless ones. In the mind of the state, however, the question of genuineness was far more serious, because at any time new oracles hostile to the ruling party or policy might appear, or an old one reappear with a new interpretation, to be used with telling force by an opposing faction. Moreover, when the life or death of the state depended upon the correct mode of procedure in relation to the Gods in times of crisis, it was vitally important to

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1. Wherefore the Pythian Priestess now ceases to deliver her oracles in verse, 9; Goodwin, Vol. III.

obtain absolutely accurate directions. This was particularly true of the Romans. In order to insure the genuineness of their Sibylline oracles they from time to time applied an official limitation by means of the censorship.

IV. Roman official limitation and validation of prophecy in its relation to the function of sacred books.

The efforts of the Romans to keep their official sacred books of oracles inviolate by separating the genuine from the spurious is bound up with the history of their use. It was as a means of securing a knowledge of the future and thereby calming the minds of an excited populace in times of crisis that the Sibylline books came to be associated with the eternal destiny of the Empire. They were brought to Rome in an age when the Romans were still uncultured, and when they were learning the ways of trade and manufacture from their Greek neighbors immediately to the south. When one reflects upon the added authority which mere printing secures even in modern times, he is in a position to understand the superstitious awe and confidence with which men to whom the art of writing was a new discovery regarded these mysterious rolls. Confidence was further heightened by the supposed antiquity of the oracles, which were written in rough Greek hexameters, and which purported to come from Erythrae in Asia Minor.

The Romans, were, however, not so much concerned to find definite predictions of the future, as to learn the correct sacrificial procedure necessary to secure the favorable outcome of their enterprises. The uncertainties of the future drove them to attempt to ground each

step they took upon the warrant of past experience, and whenever such was lacking and the crisis seemed to demand something new, men felt far more comfortable and safe after they had clothed the new in the garb of the past. What was written in these books was inspired by Apollo himself, and was therefore the will, the design, the purpose, the counsel, the decree of the God. Servius in his commentary on the Aeneid [1] derived the name Sibyl from σιὸς (Aeolic for θεὸς, Latin, deus), God, and βουλὴ (Latin, sententia), will, and called the God, Apollo fatedicus, that is, Apollo who foretells the fates.

The Cumaean Sibyl was not herself a Goddess, although at the price of her virgin modesty she might have obtained eternal life; even so she was granted a thousand years, seven hundred of which she had already lived when she conducted Aeneas to Avernus. Her prospects for the remaining three hundred years were dreary, for since she had forgotten to ask for perpetual youth, her form was gradually to shrink to a feather's weight, until finally there would be nothing left of her but her voice[2]. So intimately did the Romans associate the Sibyl with their remote past.

Ancient historians place the advent of the Sibylline books at Rome in the reign of Tarquin the Proud. Cassius Dio states that it was quite against his will that the king obtained them[3]. A woman called the Sibyl had come to him and offered to sell him certain books. As he paid no attention to her, she went away and burned one third of them and then

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1. III, 445 and VI, 12.
2. Ovid, Metamor. XIV, 101-155; cf. the Jewish Bath Qol.
3. Rom. Hist. Bk. II, frag. 11 B; Zonaras VII, 11.

came back and offered the remainder for the original price. Again rejected with scorn, she destroyed part of these, and was on the point of burning the rest when the augurs compelled the king to purchase the few that remained intact. Dionysius of Halicarnassus[1] says that the king wondered at the determination of the woman and summoned the augurs who declared it a great calamity that he had not bought all of them. Servius[2] believed that he was disturbed by the fact that the woman had not changed the price, even when six out of nine of the books had been burned.

What interpretation is to be placed on these statements? The theory that the Tarquins represent an Etruscan supremacy does not conflict with the traces of Greek influence at Rome[3] during this period. The building of the great cloaca, the Servian wall, and the Capitoline temple are achievements which presuppose considerable commercial growth, and it is possible that Rome was for the first time brought into direct contact with the Greeks. Along with commerce, then, would come Greek religious ideas and customs. Among these were the Sibylline oracles.

The written oracles represent the crystallization of a larger number of oral ones which had probably penetrated among the Romans in advance, because something must have happened to create a demand for them sufficient to overcome a strong opposition to their introduction. Moreover it is likely that there had taken place even at this early

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1. Antiq. Rom. IV 62, 3.
2. Com. Aen. VI, 72.
3. Encyc. Britt. Vol. 23, p. 618.

period an official selective process. In later centuries as these selected books had to meet the constant competition of what from the official point of view were spurious and dangerous oracles, the story of the burning of the majority of the originals by the Sibyl herself served as a convenient apology for the contention that so few among so many were to be regarded as genuine. A further precaution necessary to preserve their authority was secrecy. The two senators to whom Tarquin delivered the books for safe keeping did not entirely understand their contents, and so they sent to Greece and hired two men to come and read and interpret the books. The people of the neighborhood, who were curious to learn just what was revealed by the books bribed Marcus Acilius, one of the custodians, to copy some of the parts. When this was found out they sewed Marcus between two hides and drowned him -- the punishment afterward meted out to parricides[1].

Changes involved when the kings were driven out did not affect the Sibylline oracles. In more than one crisis they proved their worth, and, consequently, their hold on the mind of the people increased. Livy[2] records a pestilence with an accompanying famine in the year 433/2 B.C., so severe both in the city and the country that a temple was vowed to Apollo for the health of the people, and many things were done ex libris by the Duumviri to placate the Gods. Again in 399 a severe winter was followed by a noxious summer. Livy[3] states that the senate, unable to discover what caused the incurable ravages of disease, or would put an end to them, consulted the Sibylline books. Thereupon the first

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1. Cassius Dio, l. c.
2. Livy, IV 25, 31.
3. Livy, V 13.

lectisternium was celebrated, and there was an eight-day sacrifice to Apollo, Latona, Diana, Hercules, Mercury and Neptune. Not only were there public ceremonies, but also in private homes the rites were observed; hospitality abounded, and there was a general amnesty for prisoners and for personal grudges.

In all of this the influence of the Books in two directions is to be seen: first, in positive suggestions derived therefrom the introduction of new cults, and second, the confirmation and recommendation for official ritual of cults already practised in private. To ignore the latter element is to attribute far too much influence to these oracles, which were often hard to understand. Moreover, those who published and interpreted the oracles in times of crisis had to choose a particular one among many, and the choice would most naturally have been determined by existing religious tendencies, and by ceremonies with which they were already sufficiently familiar to have confidence in their efficacy.

Under such circumstances an effort to control and manipulate the oracles was naturally to be expected from those who happened to possess the right of interpreting them, and it is not surprising to find the plebeians in their attempts to gain political recognition including among other demands one for representation on the board in control of the sacred books. In 337 B.C. two of the tribunes, C. Licinius Stolo and L. Sextius, proposed that one consul at least should be a plebeian and that the priestly college which had charge of the Sibylline books should consist of ten members instead of two, and that half of these should be plebeians. After ten years of bitter struggle these proposals, together with others which accompanied them, were carried.

The manner in which the patricians attempted to forestall the demands of the popular party by playing upon the fears of the populace is pictured by Livy[1]. In their attempt to control the elections of 398 B.C. they called to their aid not only men, but God's as well. They reminded the people that the intolerable winter of 399 with its trail of pestilence had been due to the anger of the Gods on account of the results which had prostituted honors and confounded family distinctions--anger which the Books of Fate had shown how to propitiate. "The people were awed", says Livy, "not only by the dignity of the candidates, but by the fear of heaven, and to be military tribunes chose all patricians". Again, in 367, one of the arguments against the election of a plebeian to the consulship was that it would involve an insult to the Gods. It would also be dangerous, for only the patricians had the right to control the auspices. The city itself had been founded under auspices, and without auspices no measures either in peace or in war were ever carried out; no trivial matter this, for by observing auspices the fathers had built the great republic[2]. It was an argument of last resort; the conservatives saw what would happen when once the plebeians should prove their competency in the consulship: they would next demand a voice in the interpretation of the sacred books and representation on the board of augurs[3]. This is precisely what happened, for in 300, by the lex Ogulnia, their old strongholds, the sacred colleges of pontiffs and augurs, were thrown open to the plebs.

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1. Livy, V 14.
2. Livy VI 41, 4-10.
3. Livy X 8, 2.

The chief facts concerning the function, authority and consequent manipulation of the Sibylline books during the regal and early republican periods have now been traced, and the development has been found to have been: function, authority, manipulation. The crises of the Punic wars operated to enlarge the function and enhance the authority, thus preparing the way for further attempts at manipulation and control in the succeeding period of the civil wars and the early Empire.

During the Gallic invasion just before the second Punic war two vestal virgins and a scribe were condemned to death in one year for violation of the vows of purity. So great was the outrage that the Books were consulted, and Q. Fabius Pictor was sent to Delphi to inquire by what prayers and supplications the Gods could be placated. This time the Books prescribed certain extraordinary sacrifices, among which two Gauls, a man and a woman were buried alive in the Cattle Market[1].

Among the protents accompanying Hannibal's descent into Italy in 218 B.C. were the following according to Plutarch[2]: shields sweating blood; wheat heads at Antium with blood upon them; meteors and tablets falling from heaven and scattering themselves abroad. These tablets were seen in large numbers by the inhabitants of Falerii, and on one of them was written in plain letters, "Mars now brandishes his weapons". Here is an illustration of the awe with which a written message from heaven was regarded.

Other prodigies accompanying this invasion are given by Livy[3]. A bull is said to have climbed to the third story of a building in the

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1. Livy XXII 57, 36; Plutarch, Marcellus III; Orosius 97.
2. Plutarch, Fab. Max. II.
3. Livy XXI 62, 1.

Cattle Market; specter ships were seen in the sky; the temple of Hope was struck by lighning; showers of meteors fell in Picenum. The books were consulted and sacrifices, sacred holidays, gifts, lustrations, and lectisternia were instituted. In introducing this particular list of prodigies Livy remarks that when men's minds are agitated by religious awe many things are reported and rashly believed; and after describing the measures taken to counteract them, he says that after these things had been vowed and carried out ex libris Sibyllinis the minds of the people were relieved of the greater part of their religious terror.

In times of general terror the Sibylline books were not sufficient, and private soothsayers or prophets were busy producing oracles. In the year 213 B.C. an official conquisitio or collection of such oracles was made. Two prophecies of one Marcus, an Italian seer, were found[1]. The first of these, being given out after the disaster at Canna, had, of course, been confirmed. It was a warning to the descendants of Troy to beware of being drawn into a battle at that stream; it foretold that it would not be believed until the slaughter had taken place. The other prophecy was more obscure for the very good reason that being a prediction of the future it was in the nature of the case uncertain. It was, moreover, written in strange characters. It advised the Romans that if they wished to expel the foreign foe, they should vow games to Apollo to be carried out with the Greek rites. After the senate had spent a day in an effort to explain the meaning of the prophecy, it passed a senatus consultum which directed the Decemviri to look into the matter of the games of Apollo, and when they reported, the games were

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1. Livy XXV 12.

carried out as directed. Then the prophecy itself, together with the one which referred to Canna, was added to the Sibylline collection. Here is a demonstration of the manner in which that collection was formed, and even more important is the fact that it shows how the demand for a Greek rite or a Greek cult might exist apart from any suggestion from the Sibylline books.

Greek influence on Roman religion, either by direct suggestion of the Sacred Books, or by confirmation from them, extended a great deal farther than mere ritual. The worship of Asclepius had been introduced at Rome in 293 B.C., when, in the words of Ovid, "weary with caring for the dead, men saw that their human efforts were as nothing, and that the healer's arts were of no avail, they sought the aid of heaven[1]." Throughout the whole century Rome had been looking frantically for help from whatever quarter, whether from heaven or upon earth, and as the cases of Apollo and Asclepius show, Greek religion was making its influence strongly felt at Rome.

The next phase of foreign influence came from Asia Minor. In the year 204 B.C. when the people had repeatedly been filled with religious dread, the Sibylline books were inspected on account of numerous showers of meteors, and the promise was extracted from them that the foreign foe could be expelled from Italy if the Idean Mother of the Gods were brought to Rome. King Attalus, who was their ally in the war against Philip[2]--a war which Appian[3] affirms had been induced by a prediction in the Sibylline books--aided them, and the Goddess was brought to Rome by

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1. Metam. XV 622-745; cf. Livy, X 47, 7.
2. Livy XXIX 10.
3. Appian, Macedonian Affairs, frag. Mai p. 368, Loeb II, p. 13.

Scipio Nasica, who had been adjudged the "best man" of the Romans. Appian adds[1] that the Decemvirs, who consulted the Books said that something would soon fall from heaven at Pessinus in Phrygia which ought to be brought to Rome. Not long after, the news came that it had fallen. This was probably a device of the officials to quiet the people.

During these terrible times the Sibylline books were a constant source of refuge; their chief function was to give directions for relieving the minds of the people of their burden of dread; in at least one instance they were augmented; they gained a firm foothold and authority, and they were closely connected with the westward pressure of eastern religions. In the next period, the period of the Revolution (146-49 B.C.), their chief interest from the point of view of a student of the canon of the New Testament is a study of the efforts of rival parties to manipulate them.

In the days of the first Triumvirate the sacred books became a convenient instrument in the hands of scheming contenders for power. King Ptolemy Auletes of Egypt, who had been expelled from his kingdom by his angry subjects, had fled to Rome to get help in winning back his kingdom. He succeeded in having his restoration entrusted to Spinther, the friend of Cicero; but he had been rash enough to murder the majority of the One Hundred who composed the embassy sent by the Egyptians to present their side of the case, and to intimidate and bribe the rest. The Senate was angry[2]. At this juncture the statue of Jupiter on the Alban Mount was conveniently struck by lightning, and when the Sibylline verses were inspected they found this passage: "If the king of Egypt

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1. Appian, Hannib. War, 56.
2. Dio XXXIX 15-16.

come requesting any aid, refuse him not friendship, nor yet succoe him with any great force, else you will have both toils and dangers". Upon the advise of Gaius Cato they thereupon rescinded their action. Cato had been careful to get the populace on his side by exciting their curiosity as to what was found in the sacred books, and that too in face of the fact that a decree of the Senate was necessary before an oracle could be published: fearing that it might be suppressed, he compelled the priests to go before the miltitude and utter it, and their scruples in the matter had gone for naught in the face of the insistent people. Cato's real motive was, of course, to prevent anyone from gaining the prestige that would have come to the man who restored the king of Egypt with an army.

Cicero, who was exerting all his influence on behalf of his friend and benefactor, in his letters to him reveals the other side of the intrigue[1]. "The Senate", he declares[2], "supports the trumped up religious scruple, not from any respect to religion, but from ill feeling towards him (Pompey) and from disgust at the king's outrageous bribery". Three propositions were put forth[3]: First, three legates to restore the king; second, Spinther to restore him without an army; and third, Pompey to do it. In any case an army was now out of the question: the Sibylline verse had to be obeyed. The first proposition was defeated by a large majority, and the second was delayed by a filibuster. Finally, in despair of ever getting his bill through the Senate, Cicero intimated that his friend might restore the king on his own initiative, but warned him to beware of failure on account of the senatorial resolution and the

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1. Cicero, Ad fam. VIII 4, 1: ~~I~~, 1; I, 2; I, 4; I, 5; I, 7; trans. (Shuckburgh.
2. Ad fam. I, 5.
3. Ad. fam. I, 2.

religious scruple that had been introduced into the question.

That it had come to be the usual thing to consult the oracles before sacrifices of especial importance is indicated by Cassius Dio[1]. During Caesar's triumph, 46 B.C., a riot occurred among the dissatisfied soldiers. It did not cease until Caesar himself seized one man and delivered him up to punishment. "So this man", says Dio, "was executed for the reason given, and two others were slain as a sort of ritual observance. The true cause I am unable to state, inasmuch as the Sibyl made no utterance, and there was no other similar oracle". In the mind of the historian, failure to consult the oracles was so unusual as to put him at a loss for an explanation.

Caesar, however, was not indifferent to the Oracles. In the year 47 he had added one member to the pontifices and to the augurs, of whom he was one, and also to the Quindecemviri[2]. He must have been sufficiently impressed with the importance of watching over the oracles. The year 49 had been, we are told, filled with prtents, both to Caesar personally and to the capital, and "some oracles purporting to be those of the Sibyl were made known, and some men became inspired and uttered numerous divinations"[3].

The Oracles played a prominent part in the assassination of Caesar[4]. Dio thinks that it was a rumor that the Quindecemviri were spreading the report that the Sibyl had said that the Parthians would never be defeated in any other way than by a king, and were consequently going to propose that this title be granted to Caesar, which spurred the hesitating

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1. Cassius Dio, XLIII 24; trans. Loeb.
2. Dio XLII 51.
3. Dio XLII 14.
4. Dio XLIV 15, 3.

conspirators to quick action. Even if the report was not deliberately instigated by the conspirators in the first place, it at least suited their purposes admirably.

Catiline and his fellow conspirators found the sacred books of use in their designs. Plutarch[1] affirms that Cornelius Lentulus, who had been stirred up by Catiline, "was further corrupted by the vain hopes held out to him by false prophets and jugglers. These recited forged oracles in verse purporting to come from the Sibylline books, which set forth that three Cornelii were fated to be monarchs in Rome, two of whom had already fulfilled their destiny, namely, Cinna and Sulla, and that now to him, the third and remaining Cornelius, the heavenly powers were come with a proffer of monarchy, which he must by all means accept, and not ruin his opportunities by delay like Catiline. Cicero[2] says that Lentulus confirmed himself in his course from the prophecies of the Sibyllines and from the responses of the haruspices, and Sallust[3] adds that this, the twentieth year since the burning of the Capitol, would, in accordance with the portents often declared by the soothsayers, be stained with the blood of a civil war.

The Sibylline books were pressed into service also in personal feuds. Appian[4] tells how Pompey did this as he was persecuting his enemies in accordance with the law he had passed. Among one of the first offenders convicted was Gabinius, both for violation of law and for impiety, because he had invaded Egypt without a decree of the Senate and contrary to the Sibylline books.

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1. Plutarch, Cicero XVII; trans. Loeb.
2. Cicero, Cat. III 49.
3. Sallust, Cat. XLVII 2.
4. Appian, Civil Wars II 24.

Clodius' plot against Cicero[1] is another example of an attempt to manipulate the haruspices in personal feuds. During Cicero's banishment Clodius had permitted a temple of Libertas to be built on the ground occupied by Cicero's house and had had it consecrated. When Cicero returned he succeeded in persuading the pontifical college and the Senate to give it back. But in the year 56 B.C. thunder was heard beneath the Latin Plain. The haruspices were observed and sacred places were said to be desecrated. This gave Clodius another chance: Cicero was in possession of a place consecrated to Libertas!

This must have set Cicero to reflecting on the validity of haruspices and oracles in general. At all events he does set forth his views in the De Divinatione, written B. C. 44. In I, 43 he presents the stock arguments in favor of confidence in divination. What king, what people, has there ever been who did not employ divine prediction, whether in peace or in war? the Athenians have their manteis, and the Lacedemonians their augur, and on affairs of major importance they consult the oracles at Delphi, Hammone or Dodona. Lycurgus had confirmed his laws on the authority of Apollo, and by means of religio (religious fear) changes therein were prohibited. Among the Romans themselves how often had the Senate ordered the Decemviri to go to the Books! In certain portents of especial danger the answers derived from the haruspices had been checked and found to agree with the verses of the Sibyl. This point needs emphasis, because it shows the reciprocal influence at work between ordinary divination and the Sibylline books.

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1. Cicero, De haruspicum responso.

Cicero, however, is sceptical[1]. What authority can such madness as that of the Sibyl have? When she is in possession of her senses she sees nothing; what she sees is seen only when she is beside herself. Only lately a false report that Rome ought to have a king got abroad in her name: let those in charge of the Books divine therefrom anything they please rather than that Rome should have a king, for neither Gods nor men would ever allow that. Another objection is that the Sibylline verses are altogether indefinite as to the names of persons, places, and times; nor are they so spontaneous as is commonly supposed: the acrostic style is a mark of studied artificiality impossible to genuine inspiration. In short, Cicero is unwilling to believe fables whether of the Sibyl, or the prophetic verses of Marcius, or the secrets of Apollo himself.

Enough has been said concerning the efforts of political factions to manipulate the Sibylline oracles and the interpretation of them for their own interest to show that anyone who happened to be for the time in control of the government had to exercise a careful supervision over them. For in spite of occasional scepticism such as that of Cicero, they had by this time become bound up in the minds of the vast majority of the Romans with the eternal destiny of the city. It is not surprising therefore to find the first emperors exercising a censorship over them.

Augustus in 18 B.C. ordered the Sibylline verses to be copied off by the priests with their own hands in order that no one else might read them[2]: this was necessary because with the passing of time they

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1. Cicero, De divinatione, 54-55. 2. Dio LIV 17, 2.

had faded, and the less distinct they were, the greater was the chance of manipulation. Suetonius[1] says that after Augustus had finally assumed the office of pontifex Maximus on the death of Lepidus he "collected whatever prophetic writings of Greek and Latin origin were in circulation anonymously or under the names of authors of little repute, and burned more than two hundred of them, retaining only the Sibylline books and making a choice even among these". These he deposited in two guilded cases under the pedestal of the Palatine Apollo.

This is a typical example of the Roman method: the authenticity of a sacred book could be settled by the authoritative pronouncement of the princeps; but it is at the same time an exhibition of the futility of the Roman method; for the production of oracles went on apace. That it had been general over the Mediterranean world is shown by the fact that after the restoration of the temple of Jupiter on the Capitol, which, together with the Sibylline books, had been burned in 83 B.C., the ambassadors sent by the Senate in the year 76 brought back from Erythrae about a thousand verses and collected others in Ilium, Samos, Sicily, Italy and Africa; and that it continued is proved by the fact that the Jewish propagandists found the oracular form an invaluable means of cutting underneath the gentile boast of superior antiquity, and, on the other hand, of convincing them of the superior authority of the Jewish religion.

Another proof of the failure of the censorship under Augustus is to be seen in the action of the practical Tiberius. He had little confidence in the efficacy of the remedies that were to be found in the

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1. Suetonius, Div. Aug. 31, 1; trans. Loeb.

Books for disasters which could be remedied by human measures. In 15 A.D., after a disastrous flood of the Tiber, Asinius Gallus proposed that the Sibylline books should be consulted, but this Tiberius would not permit. Instead, he ordered Ateius Capito and Lucius Aruntius to devise a plan for keeping the river within its banks[1]. This throws some light on his attitude when in the year 32 Quintilianus, a tribune of the plebs, and Caninius Gallus, one of the college of Fifteen, carried a proposal in the Senate at a time when only a few members were present, to add another volume to the Sibyllines. Tiberius excused the youthful tribune for his lack of experience, but rebuked Gallus, who, knowing the correct procedure, nevertheless brought it up in the Senate without waiting for the opinion of the college, and without having the poem read and acted on in the usual way. The emperor further reminded them of the action taken by Augustus, and ruled that the book be submitted to the Fifteen for examination. The nature of the proposed addition is unknown to us, but it is likely that the chief objection was to the incorrect procedure in getting it sanctioned.

By the time of Augustus the Sibylline oracles had become increasingly associated with the greatness of Rome, and in the first century of the Christian era they were increasingly regarded as the infallible guarantee of the eternal destiny of the Empire. Poets like Vergil and Ovid linked the Sibyl with Aeneas himself[2]. Tibullus (d. 18 B.C.) on the occasion of the installation of Messanlinus as one of the board of Fifteen well expresses this feeling[3]: "Be gracious Phoebus; a new priest sets foot within thy temple...Thou seest from far the things to

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1. Tacitus, Ann. I 76.
2. Vergil, Aen. VI, and Ovid, Metam. XIV 101-155.
3. Tibullus II 5; trans. Loeb.

come...With thee her guide the Sibyl who sings Fates' hidden will in six-foot measures hath never played the Romans false. Phoebus, grant leave to touch the seeress' holy scroll and teach him thyself the meaning of her strains". It was the Sibyl that gave responses to Aeneas when he never dreamed that there would be a Rome, and predicted that the Roman nation was fated to rule the earth "wherever Ceres looks from upon the fields she tends". And Horace closed his Carmen Saeculare with the prayer, "May Phoebus the prophet...prolong the Roman's power and Latium's prosperity to cycles ever new and ages ever better! And may Diana, who holds the Aventine and Algidius heed the entreaty of the Fifteen Men and incline her gracious ears to the children's prayers!"

Following the great period of Augustus and Tiberius, the Sibylline books, although not consulted so frequently, were still resorted to in times of crisis. Having described the measures taken to rebuild the city of Rome after the great fire in the reign of Nero, Tacitus[1] remarked, "These measures, indeed, were provided by human wisdom. In the next place expiatory sacrifices were required and the Sibylline books were consulted". In accordance with them supplications were decreed to Vulcan, Ceres and Proserpine; prayers and sacrifices were offered to Juno and a Lectisternium was observed. But whether or not the Gods were thought to have been propitiated thereby, the prevalent hostility to Nero was not allayed. Consequently Nero inaugurated his hideous persecution of the Christians. The panic of the populace at the time was aggravated by the memory of the oracle which had been chanted in the days of Tiberius:

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1. Tacitus, Ann. XV 44.

"Thrice three hundred cycles of tireless years being ended
Civil strife shall the Romans destroy".

Nero to encourage them reported that these verses were nowhere to be found, but they only fell to repeating another oracle which they averred to be a genuine Sibylline production:

"Last of the sons of Aeneas a matricide shall govern"

"And so", says Cassius Dio, "it proved, whether this was actually revealed beforehand by some divination, or whether the populace now for the first time gave it the form of a divine saying adapted to existing circumstances. For Nero was indeed the last emperor of the Julian line descended from Aeneas"[1]. This episode shows how both an outraged populace and an offending government each at the same time resorted to the sacred books for assistance against the other.

Similar unofficial oracles circulated at the time of the eruption of Vesuvius under Titus. According to Plutarch[2], Thespesius of Soli who during the three days he was unconscious from a fall had actually been transported to the celestial seat of the tripod of Apollo where the Sibyl, whirled about in the face of the moon, continually sang of future events. It was the place whence all dreams were dispersed, and had it not been for the extraordinary brightness of the light which dazzled his eyes, he could have seen the very tripod itself. As it was, he heard, among other things, "what was prophesied concerning the mountain of Vesuvius, and the future destruction of Dicaearchia by fire; together with a piece of verse concerning a certain emperor (Vespasian) or great famous chieftain of that age,

'Who, though so just that no man could accuse.
Howe'er his empire should through sickness lose'".

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1. Rom. Hist. LXII 18; trans. H. B. Foster.
2. Concerning such whom God is slow to punish, 22, Goodwin Vol.IV,p.185.

Great earthquakes also drove the frightened inhabitants of the Empire to the Sibylline books. One such occurred in the year 242 A.D. under Gordianus. The Books were inspected and the required sacrifices were celebrated "throughout the whole city and the whole world"[1]. Another, especially severe, occurred a few years later in the reign of Gallienus II. It came in the midst of many other disasters. The cities of Asia suffered most, but Rome and Libya were also shaken. Workshops with their workmen were swallowed up, and the sea covered many cities. Many died of fright, and to add to the horror, a plague broke out in Rome and Achaia. The Sibylline books were inspected and accordingly a sacrifice was offered to Jupiter Salutaris[2].

More terrible even than earthquakes, however, were the invasions of the barbarians. What the Sibylline books meant to patriotic Romans as they struggled to preserve their Empire from disruption is reflected in the alleged proceedings under Aurelian in 270 A.D., when the Marcomani broke through, and fear of a repetition of the disasters under Gallienus was general. In the midst of the disorders at Rome, the Sibylline books, recognized for the help they had given in public affairs, were consulted. In them it was found that sacrifices were to be made in certain places. This was done, and accordingly, the barbarians were checked and were killed piecemeal by Aurelian as they wandered about. The whole incident as given by Flavius Vopiscus[3] is of especial importance because of a reference to the Christians in the letter ascribed to Aurelian: "I marvel that you, holy fathers, have so long

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1. Cordus HRF frg. 21; H. Peter: Iuli Capitolini Hist. Aug. Gord. Tres 26, 2 (Script. Hist. Augustae, Teubner, 1883).
2. Trebellii Polonis, Hist. Aug. Gallieni Duo 5; Peter I, 2, 175.
3. Hist. Aug. Aurel. 18:2-21:4.

hesitated to open the Sacred Books; you act almost as if you were in a church of the Christians, and not in the temple of all the Gods". He thereupon exhorted them to carry out the required sacrifices, reminding them of victories in past history which were made possible by divine aid which, however, had come only after the inspection of the Sacred Books and obedience to their directions. The reason given for this hesitancy is put into the mouth of Fulvius Sabinus, city praetor, who from the very first news of the incursion of the Marcomani had urged that the Books be consulted: it was a false flattery of the Emperor in the mistaken notion that such action would be a confession of weakness. Consultation of the Sibylline books was the last resort in distress. As it became less frequent there was a corresponding danger that the overwrought fears of the populace might be aggravated. It was the logical result of the air of mystery with which state control had surrounded them, so that in spite of the fact that they were believed to contain and to guarantee the eternal destiny of the Empire, their use actually became dangerous because it was associated only with the gravest crises. Meanwhile the common people, deprived of the assurance they might have derived of them, were seeking their satisfactions elsewhere, and as the state which guaranteed the official books crumbled, the Sibylline books were destined to become a back-eddy in the current of the new life which was flowing into the Empire.

The end of their official influence, however, was neither sudden, nor was complete oblivion their fate. Sometimes they commended a good Emperor: a Sibylline oracle is said to have declared that if Probus who was killed in 282 A.D., had lived longer, the world would not have had

barbarians; again, they comforted a superstitious ruler such as Maxentius. At the beginning of the Persian war they gave a warning answer to Julian[1]. The office of the Quindecemviri existed as late as the year 383[2], but at the beginning of the fifth century the voice of the Sibyl was officially silenced forever. In the Gothic crisis about the year 400 Stilicho secretly delivered them to the flames. His motive must be largely deduced from what has been said concerning the danger attendant upon consulting them in great crises. Yet his action must have seemed to many a staunch pagan as it did to Rutilius Namatianus[3]: he had committed treason against the designs of the very Gods. It was a crime that might well cause all the torments of Nero in Tartarus to cease while a more dismal shadow consumed the torches of Hades, for Nero had merely murdered his own mother, a mortal, while Stilicho had put to death the immortal mother of the world.

V. The influence on Christianity of Graeco-Roman attitudes toward books of prophecy.

While the official prophecy of the Romans thus functioned for them in their efforts to maintain the Empire against the inroads of the barbarians, there was still greater need for sacred books among minority national groups, and among adherents of religions engaged in the even more desperate struggle for social recognition as over against the political and religious system of the Roman government. Judaism had borne the brunt of the conflict for Christianity at its initial stage.

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1. Ammian. Marcell. XXIII 1, 7.
2. Pauly-Wissowa, Real-Encyclopädie der classischen Altertumswissenschaft, II A, stuttgart 1921, p. 2116.
3. Rut. Nam., De reditu suo II, 49-60.

Because it prepared the way in this respect for the new religious movement at its initial stages, as well as because of the genetic relations between the two, an examination of the influence of Graeco-Roman needs and use of sacred books upon Christianity must begin with the evidence furnished by the Jewish Sibylline Oracles.

Since the Sibylline prophecies were at the service of the state, the Jews, and later the Christians, found in them a ready means of religious propaganda. The name and fame of the Sibyl served to recommend to the gentiles the teachings and the religious faith of the Jewish prophets. On the other hand there was much among the responses of heathen oracles that was capable of appearing to great advantage in a Jewish dress. It was, of course, the Jews of the Dispersion who were most concerned to defend the national spirit and character against an environment which threatened to absorb them, and where possible, to do more than that--to win converts. Now while the historical evidence for the antiquity of the Jewish nation presented by Josephus, and the philosophical reasonings of Philo in support of monotheism, might reach the thinking people of their day, as far as the masses were concerned they were more at a disadvantage. Not so the Sibyl. Her poetry was much more easily retained in the memory; she enjoyed a great reputation, and in painting the future she was far superior, since prediction was of the very essence of her existence. It was an easy matter to transfer the denunciations, the threats, the appeals for monotheism, and the glorious promises of the Old Testament prophets and of the apocalyptic and pseudepigraphic exponents of Judaism to the Sibyl. All that was necessary was to interweave these elements with actual historical data--to change the tense of history

from the past to the future, and to substitute the name of the Eternal for that of Apollo. It must be remembered that while there were many Sibyls in various parts of the Empire, their prophecies were all readily referred to one very ancient and holy Sibyl, who had at the very beginning foretold everything that was to happen upon earth, thus making even Homer a plagiarist[1]. In the competition between Judaism and Hellenism for the prestige of antiquity this was a master stroke.

The motives which inspired the Jewish Sibyllists were not always so commendable. Composing oracles of destruction was one way, and sometimes perhaps the only way, for a defeated or persecuted minority to vent its rage upon its tormentor. It was a great relief to the emotions to gloat over calamities that already had actually happened and to anticipate their repetition. Conversely, flattery might be used to pit one potential enemy against another, as when Antiochus Epiphanes was threatened while Rome was flattered. No sooner, however, did Rome show her designs against the Hebrew state than she herself was correspondingly threatened. After the destruction of Jerusalem by Vespasian and Titus the wrath of the Sibyl knew no bounds. With great satisfaction she "predicted" the flight of Nero, the matricide, across the Euphrates, noting with especial gratification the bloodshed at Rome during his absence[2]. In like manner the great eruption of Vesuvius in the year 79 A.D. was construed as a sign of God's anger against the Romans for their treatment of the Jews:

"But when from deep cleft of Italian land
Fire shall come flashing forth in the broad heaven,
And many cities burn and men destroy,
And much black ashes shall fill the great sky,

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1. Johannes Geffcken in E. Hennecke, Neutestamentliche Apokryphen, Tübingen 1924, p. 400.
2. Sib. Or. Bk. IV 149-180 (Terry).

And small drops like red earth shall fall from heaven,
Then know the anger of the God of heaven,
For that they without reason shall destroy
The nation of the pious"[1].

The predicted vengeance, however, did not come; and with the passing of time the Jewish Sibyl once more became loyal. Not so the Christians. Among many of them the same sort of bitter denunciation of Rome and gloating over her anticipated calamities as is manifested in the Apocalypse of John continued. It was even more bold, in that the epithet "Babylon" was now dropped and the name of Rome itself was mentioned. This increased boldness is to be explained by the desperate situation in which the Christians found themselves.

At first the Christians used the Jewish Sibyllines which were at hand, especially the material in Books I, II, and V[2]. To these they added oracles of their own composition; then they composed entirely new books. This was the logical consequence of the breach with the Jews, whose country in Book VI 26[3] is called "Sodomitic land", and of the utilization of the Sibyl for specifically Christian propaganda. Book VI, which is a brief hymn in honor of Christ and the Cross, probably belonging to third century writings of a popular nature[4], "predicts" the miracles and the death of Jesus:

"Billows shall he tread, sickness of mankind
Shall he destroy, he shall raise up the dead.
And many sufferings shall he drive away;
And from one scrip shall be men's fill of bread"[5].

Here the needs and the hopes of the more humble classes become articulate. During the second century the anti-Jewish animus was overshadowed by the common danger from Rome which threatened both Christianity

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1. Sib.Or.Bk. IV 169-176; trans.by M.S.Terry, The Sibylline Oracles, NY 1899.
2. See O.Stählin, Die Altchristliche Griechische Literatur, München 1924, p1219.
3. Terry. 4. Stählin, l.c. 5. Terry, p. 145, ll. 16-19.

and Judaism. This is shown by the fact that lines 1-216 of Book VIII, which were probably written by a Jew shortly before 180 A.D., were worked over and utilized by the Christians[1]. It is the protest of an oppressed social group, of the humble against the powerful, the poor against the rich:

"Then, fifth, the famous lawless kingdom last
Of the Italians shall show many evils
Unto all mortals and shall spend the toils
Of men of every land. And it shall lead
The untamed kings of nations to the West,
Make laws for peoples and subject all things"[2].
... ... "For ages thus
Shall those who purpose to possess the land
That feedeth many plunder laboring men,
In order that procuring larger space,
They may enslave them by a false pretense.
And if the huge earth from the starry heaven
Held not her throne far off there had not been
For men an equal light, but bought with gold,
It had belonged to rich men and God must
For poor men have prepared another world"[3].

This state of things, however, was not to continue. Upon haughty Rome would come from heaven the stroke so richly deserved. Rased to the ground, consumed by fire, all her wealth perished, the dwelling place of wolves and foxes, beyond the power of any God to save--where then would be the decrees of her Senate?[4] Not the least of the woes to come upon the world was thought to be the return of Nero, which was to precede the time when the Almighty himself would come to judge the living and the dead[5]. Then no more would Syrian or Greek, or any other, lay down his neck beneath the yoke of Rome[6]. The period of Rome's tyranny was to be limited to 948 years, reckoned from the numerical value of the Greek letters in the name Rome[7]. The impending judgment is described

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1. Stählin, l. c.
2. Terry, p. 161, ll. 12-17.
3. Terry, p. 162, ll. 37-46.
4. Terry, p. 162-3, ll. 47-58.
5. Sib. Or. VIII, Terry ll. 84ff.
6. Terry, VIII, ll. 166-9.
7. ρ=100, ω=800, μ=40, η=8; Terry, VIII, ll. 195-6.

in the celebrated third century acrostic, ΙΗΣΟΥΣ ΧΡΕΙΣΤΟΣ ΘΕΟΥ ΥΙΟΣ ΣΩΤΗΡ ΣΤΑΥΡΟΣ, Jesus Christ, Son of God, Savior, (the Cross)[1].

This acrostic is an excellent illustration of the influence of Graeco-Roman forms and attitudes upon Christianity. The acrostic form had long since been the expedient adopted by the Sibyl in order to preserve the oracles intact from the meddling and use of those who put forth "spurious" oracles, and at the same time to authenticate their authorship. The following example is given by Cicero[2]: QUAE Q. ENNIUS FECIT. As far as official control was concerned it was an unsuccessful expedient, since it merely suggested a convenient method for authentication independent oracles. As a means of discriminating between the "genuine" and the "spurious" it was, of course, useless from the moment imitators chose to employ it. Indeed the acrostic form became an argument against the inspiration of the oracles. Consequently when an acrostic of Christ and the Cross appeared, the official oracles were at a serious disadvantage in that the technique upon which they had relied for their authority no longer availed, whereas the common people, to whom the official prophecies were but the vague possession of a remote governmental authority, and as such potentially the instruments of its tyranny, found in the new oracles the immediate promise of an invincible power to help.

The foregoing remark will also serve as a further explanation of the fact that the Old Testament Scriptures enjoyed enhanced authority under the name of the Sibyl. For the problem of the New Testament,

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1. Quoted in full by Eusebius in his report of Constantine's Oration to the Assembly of the Saints, XVIII, and, excepting the seven lines representing the Cross, by Augustine, De Civitate Dei, XVIII 23.
2. Cicero, De div. 54-55 (110-113).

also, the influence of the Sibyl is of great interest. During the period when these more recent writings had to win a place side by side with the older authority, the circulation of quotations and synopses of them under the prestige of the familiar figure of the Sibyl was a potent factor in giving them the requisite authority. The Christian Sibyllist showed an extended knowledge not only of the Old Testament, but of the New Testament as well. In contrast to the church Fathers, their actual quotations are not extended. The thought and the ideal is from Scripture, the mode of expression is the writer's own: he paraphrases them to express his theology, Christology and eschatology, and to reinforce his admonitions to a pure, temperate and honorable life in the midst of a corrupt world.

Notwithstanding their influence and usefulness to Christianity, the Sibylline Oracles were not included in the New Testament. Conceivably the Gospel story, and eschatology in particular, might have assumed this form; but it must be remembered that during the period in which the New Testament was taking shape, Christianity was not in a position to wrest from Rome her official sacred books and claim them for its own as it had taken the Old Testament from the Jews. With the latter there was a direct genetic relation, but the importation of Christianity into the Oracles of the Sibyl was in the nature of the case artificial. Moreover, the Sibylline books were inseparably associated with the state, and they could therefore not be used by the church as official books, even after the new religion had triumphed; for then they were intrinsically at a disadvantage as compared with the writings which had meanwhile been profiting by the transfer of veneration from the Oracles to themselves,

and which had proved their worth by virtue of their capacity to function amid the circumstances discussed above in Part One. By that time also the developing organization of the Catholic church required a strict supervision and control of "prophecy". The importance of the Sibylline oracles for an understanding of the history of the New Testament canon lies, therefore, not so much in their direct use and influence as in the attitudes which had for centuries been developing toward them, for it was these attitudes that were exploited by the Christians. How they did this must now be considered.

The writer of First Clement in urging the Corinthian schismatics to leave the church voluntarily "in peace" and for the good of all concerned, set before them the following example from "the heathen": "Many kings and rulers, when a time of pestilence has set in, have followed the counsel of oracles, and given themselves up to death, that they might rescue their subjects through their own blood. Many have gone away from their own cities that sedition might have an end"[1]. A moment's reflection on the desperate struggle of the leaders of the early church either to win, or control, or drive out stubborn opposing factions will make it obvious that a writer like First Clement would choose the most effective means of persuasion at his command, and it is consequently significant that he chose to set the oracles of God (he had just complimented them on their good understanding of the Scriptures[2]) and their claims to obedience over and above those which even "heathen" kings had obeyed with such good results. To the inhabitants of a Greek

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1. I Clem. LV, 1; trans. K. Lake, Apostolic Fathers (Loeb).
2. I Clem. LIII, 1.

city with its interminable factions and civil strife it was a telling appeal: the writer felt that he could make his appeal for harmony effective by transferring the belief in the authority of oracles to belief in the Scriptures which were in possession of the Church.

In the reliability of the revelation given in the Scriptures the Christians had absolute confidence. "The longsuffering One", declared the writer of the Epistle of Barnabas (132 A.D.), "made all things known to us beforehand that we should not be ship-wrecked"[1]; and again, "Therefore we ought to give great thanks to the Lord that he has given us knowledge of the past, and wisdom for the present, and that we are not without understanding for the future"[2].

Such confidence was very much easier when it could be reinforced for the individual by the authority of the group. The necessary step which associated the Scriptures with the church at large was facilitated at Rome by the attitudes attaching to the Sibyl. To think of the church as a living revelation having in her possession an authoritative book and, what is more important, capable of writing a new one in response to any need that might arise, was an easy matter for a man like Hermas (ca. 148 A.D.). He says in Vision II, 4: "And a revelation was made to me, brethren, while I slept, by a very beautiful young man who said to me, 'Who do you think that the aged woman was, from whom you received the little book?' I said, 'The Sibyl'. 'You are wrong', he said, 'she is not'. 'Who is she then?' I said. 'The church', he said. I said to him, 'Why then is she old?' 'Because', he said, 'she was created the first of all things. For this reason she is old; and for her sake was the world established'".

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1. Barn. III 6.
2. Barn. V 3; trans. Lake.

Whether Hermas himself had raised the question of the relation between the church and the Sibyl, or whether his catechumens had pressed it upon his attention (which is quite likely) the fact is that the church is here seen in the act of displacing the ancient Prophetess. Hermas is attempting to capitalize in the interests of his new Revelation the attitudes attaching to the Sibyl. In the very fact that he did so, and, moreover, the fact that his Revelation was for long a part of the New Testament canon, there is a clear exhibition of the influence of the Graeco-Roman attitude toward sacred books upon Christianity. It was the working out in the new religion of the idea of the authority of an organization governing the production and distribution of a revealed book. The great age attributed to the "woman" by Hermas and his circle is a further confirmation of the interpretation that they regarded the church as taking the place of the Sibyl. Moreover, after finishing the reading, she is represented as having gone toward the East[1]: the Sibyl had come from the East to the West. Another point deserving notice is that the practical church at Rome was applying the useful and the profitable elements of these revelations to its own members, while referring the harsh and severe features to the heathen and the apostates. Thus the church was not only substituting herself for the Sibyl and exploiting the attitudes of the Greeks and Romans towards her, but was directing against them in turn their own weapons.

Also in their calmer and more reasoned efforts to win a place for themselves among the religions of the Empire, the Christians turned to their advantage the attitudes of their opponents towards their own

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1. Hermas, Vis. I, 4.

prophetical utterances. Justin Martyr did not deny the validity of oracles; on the contrary he was disposed to make belief in them the argument for permission to Christians to believe the more firmly in their God. Since he was able to find common ground in such utterances as those of the Sibyl and Hystaspes, who, like the Christians had predicted a dissolution by God of things corruptible, he was content to ask for the same favor as those who were not Christians granted to their Gods[1]. His defence of Jesus against the charge of being a magician was an appeal to prophecy: things had and were happening just as predicted. But in order to carry so great a weight of argument, prophecy itself had to be authenticated. To this end Justin was able to affirm that the kings at Jerusalem had preserved carefully the books of the prophets as they themselves had arranged them. Then Ptolemy, when he formed a library, got them from Herod and had them translated. "And when this was done, the books remained with the Egyptians, where they are to this day. They are also in the possession of all Jews throughout the world; but they, though they read, do not understand"[2]. The full force of this appeal to the ruling authorities (the Apology was addressed to Antoninus Pius and Marcus Aurelius) can be realized only in the light of the care which the Roman government had taken throughout the centuries to preserve intact its sacred books.

Theophilus of Antioch went even farther. Like the Sibyl among the Greeks, the Hebrew prophets, not one or two, but many, had predicted pestilences, famines and wars. "And they all", he affirmed, "have spoken

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1. First Apol. XVIII and XX.
2. First Apol. XXX 1; trans. Ante-Nicene Fathers, Vol. I.

things consistent and harmonious with each other, both what happened before them and what happened in their own time, and what things are now being fulfilled in our own day: wherefore we are persuaded also concerning the future things that they will fall out as also the first have been accomplished."[1] In this confidence in the Sibyl he quoted from her a lengthy reproach against men for not worshipping the one God. Theophilus had been born of heathen parents, only becoming a Christian after reaching the age of manhood, and we see in him the Gentile attitude towards sacred books as it was modified by the Christian Scriptures, and as it in turn affected the veneration in which those Scriptures were held.

The effect of the Graeco-Roman spirit upon the Christian attitude and use of sacred books may be further shown by tracing it in connection with the corresponding advantage taken by the Christians of the Gentile conception of God. For God, according to Clement of Alexandria, was known also to the Greeks, but only in an inadequate way. The Christians were therefore not announcing another God, but only a more adequate way of conceiving, and a more acceptable way of worshipping, the God who was already known to Jew, Gentile and Christian alike. This same God, who had given the Jews their prophets, had also granted to the more excellent of the Greeks the same gift. "Take also", he says[2], "the Hellenic books, read the Sibyl, how it is shown that God is one, and how the future is indicated". "There is one God...he reigns over heaven, he rules earth, he truly is":--Clement finds the utterance of the Sibyl in which these words occur in such remarkable accordance with inspiration that he feels entirely justified in allowing her to be the first to sing the song of

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1. Theoph. II 9; A-NF, Vol. II.
2. Quoting the Acts of Paul; Strom. VI, v.

salvation. In spite of her lack of outward beauty of diction, he gave her a higher place among those who had borne testimony to the truth than he gave to the poets, classing her songs with the divine Scriptures and institutions of wisdom which formed the short road to salvation[1]. Those oracles, however, which were not adapted to his purpose he consigned to the region of antiquated fables[2].

The Christian procedure of adapting some oracles and rejecting others, and of putting into the mouth of the Sibyl the message of the Hebrew prophets and of the Gospel writers did not, however, go unchallenged. Celsus, for example, objected that while the Christians set no value on oracles of the Pythian priestess, of the priests of Dodona, of Clarus, of Branchidae, of Jupiter Ammon and a multitude of others, they accepted those which might or might not have been uttered in Judea[3]. He charged the Christians with having the presumption to include in the writings of the Sibyl many impious things[4]. In reply, Origen applied the test of morality both to the method and persons by which the oracular prophecies had been given, and to their effect in elevating the lives of men. The preference, he insisted, lay decidedly with the Jewish prophets[5], and with such utterances of Jesus as Mt. 10:18 and 7:22-23, which were rightly regarded as oracles. Although this was beside the point as far as the historical objection was concerned--Origen

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1. Exhort. to the Heathen, VIII.
2. Ib. II.
3. Celsus VII 2.
4. Celsus, Bk. VII 2.
5. Celsus, Bk. VII 53.

could do little better than challenge Celsus to produce the original uninterpolated copies of the Oracles--it is true that the Christians were taking a long step in advance by thus attaching more of moral significance to prophecy.

Such was the pressure of Graeco-Roman oracles for recognition by the new religion. How strong it was is shown by Celsus' unfavorable comparison of Jesus with the Sibyl: "If you had said even of the Sibyl, whose authority some of you acknowledge, that she was a child of God, you would have said something more reasonable"[1].

On the other hand, Christians, when they saw that they could win their point by means of the utterances of the Sibyl, were often not unwilling to meet the demand for her recognition. Lactantius, whose writings are a mine of Sibylline Oracles, said that while the prophets, who, filled with the Spirit of God, had spoken of nothing else than his favor towards the righteous and anger towards the ungodly, they were nevertheless not believed by those who made a display of wisdom. He therefore proposed to seek those testimonies which they could either believe or at any rate not oppose[2]. In his day argument from the Sibylline Oracles was facilitated by the common use of them, only the volumes of the Cumaean, in which were written the fates of the Romans, being kept secret[3]. It was, however, necessary to establish the authenticity and the authority of the Sibylline utterances themselves. This Lactantius did by appealing to the historians who had mentioned them, and by calling attention to the prediction which the Erythraean

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1. Celsus, Bk. VII 53.
2. Lact., De ira Dei 22.
3. Lact., De ira Dei 23.

Sibyl herself had made that the time would come that she would be called mad and deceitful. This was why, like the Hebrew prophets, her writings had been neglected for many ages until the nativity and passion of Christ had revealed them[1]. As a prediction of Christ and as the basis of a strong appeal for monotheism, the Sibylline Oracles continued to prove their worth, so that Augustine in his day could say that because the Sibyl had spoken against false Gods she ought to be reckoned among those who belong to the City of God[2].

In the light of what has been said it will be seen that the Sibyl had a good claim to such citizenship. Having functioned so continuously in times of crisis through the long history of the Roman people, her books had accustomed men to look for help to divinely inspired writings. The progressive movement of her authority from the East to the West had been an effective means of cutting the channel through which Eastern religions, particularly that of the Jews, had flowed Romeward, bringing with them their sacred books. The same attitudes and needs which made the LXX acceptable to the western Mediterranean world also made inevitable a further development along the line of the actual writing of new sacred books as soon as the Old Testament could no longer meet the requirements of the abounding life of the Christian movement. The agent of production was the individual acting under the stimulus of the group, and the selective process which ultimately resulted in the New Testament canon was bound up with the developing organization of the church. A powerful factor in this close association was the Roman attitude, trained as it was in the method of settling such matters by official procedure and decree. Before proceeding to examine the relation of the developing church to the growing canon, however, it is necessary to examine certain other functions of sacred books in the Graeco-Roman world.

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1. Lact., Div. Inst. IV 15.
2. Augustine, City of God 7.

CHAPTER VIII

BOOKS OF MAGIC AND BOOKS FOR THE FUTURE LIFE

Books of magic and books for use in the future life involve, of course, an element of prophecy in that they also aim to give assurance as to the future. Since, however, the treatment of Graeco-Roman prophetical books has been from the point of view of the relation between function and official control in the case of the Sibylline Oracles, and since books of magic and books for the dead played so large a part in the ancient world, it will be necessary to give them separate consideration.

I. The concept and origin of books of magic.

A whole series of human needs was met by books of magic. They were especially useful in dealing with cases of sickness and demon possession, and in death they guaranteed the triumph of the dead over the hostile powers of the other world. The development and use of books of magic was especially characteristic of Egypt. The author of many such books was the God Thoth, the inventor of writing, who was also endowed with a Gnosis which nothing could withstand[1]. He was both physician and magician, for the two were inseparable in ancient times. In the Graeco-Roman period he appeared as an Egyptian Aesculapius. A temple decoration in Philae of the time of Tiberius represents him as that God, holding in his hand a staff round which a serpent winds itself. In the late texts many prayers for healing are addressed to him, and it was

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1. Nav. Totb. 116, 7.

possibly this side of his activity which had much to do with the growth of his popularity[1].

As the firstborn of the Gods, Thoth came to be regarded as creator of all that came to be subsequently to himself. His special mode of creation was by utterance, the word of the thinker giving being to his thought. That speech possessed a creative efficiency was the underlying idea of the magical formulae of the Pyramids. Like the Biblical conception of the far-reaching power of the blessing and the curse was the Egyptian belief that a word could summon a thing into being or banish it into nothingness[2].

Thoth was also the scribe of the Gods. In this capacity he was conceived after the fashion of Pharaoh's scribe, whose mysterious knowledge and power brought into being what was not previously in existence. Hence the qualities of mystery and magical power ascribed in the late period to Thoth as the Scribe of the Divine Book, and as the author of all kinds of texts--books, architect's plans, temple-inscriptions and inscriptions on stelae and tablets, and collections of liturgical documents--were naturally transferred to his writings[3]. The Ptolemaic title of Thoth, "the Dweller in the Library" grew out of the custom of the Egyptian scholar or scribe of setting up in his study or library the statue of the God as ibis or ape. Being lord of the scribes, he was regarded as lord of all knowledge, the "knower" par excellence, the measurer of time for the Gods and men generally, and hence the God of fate[4].

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1. Patrick Boylan, Thoth the Hermes of Egypt, Oxford 1922, p. 131.
2. Boylan, p. 120.
3. Boylan, p. 99.
4. Boylan, p. 84.

The Egyptian Aesculapius was only one of many authors of books of magic, some divine and some human. A papyrus found at Thebes dating about the middle of the second century A.D. begins, "The sacred book entitled Monas, the Eighth of Moses, dealing with the holy name"[1]. Among certain Gnostic sects Monas was the name of the highest and unknown God, the source of all, and the use of his name therefore added power to the book. Other books, among them one called the "Key of Moses", are referred to in the same papyrus.

From the foregoing examples the underlying conception may be stated. The authors of books of magic were sometimes the Gods themselves and sometimes human beings, particularly famous men in the past, who were in possession of the power of the Gods. Since the mere spoken word was sufficient for the Gods (and for men endowed like them with powers of control over the hostile and beneficent forces of nature and destiny) to accomplish their desires, the efficacy of the spoken word was naturally transferred to the written. The book then had the advantage of definiteness, because it eliminated the danger of any mistake in the use of formulae which might have made them ineffective.

II. The uses of books of magic.

(a) Graeco-Roman. Such power could be applied to many needs; but particularly urgent were cases of sickness and demon possession. An example has already been given from the third century Tebtunis Papyrus[2]. In it the prayer for preservation from sickness is preceded by a long magical formula arranged in triangular form, apex downward. The first line is

"Ablanathanablanamacharamarachamarach".

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1. C. Leemens, Excerpta ex libris apocryphis Moisis, Lugduni Batavorum, in Museo Antiquario, et apud E. J. Brill 1885, Vs. 1, p. 1a.
2. See p. 90.

This is repeated minus the first and last letters of each line, th and ch counting as one letter, until the apex of the triangle is reached:

ach
a.

Of similar power were the famous Ephesian Grammata: "askion, kataskion, lix, tetrax, damnameneus, aision", said to have been spoken by Croesus on his funeral pyre. Their use was common all over Greece. A reference by Plutarch[1] indicates that exorcists were accustomed to command those possessed with demons to pronounce them. Subsequently many meanings came to be attached to these mysterious but potent words, but their original meaning, if they had any, is impossible to determine. The seven vowels and combinations of vowels also played a large part in the Hellenistic magical papyri. The names of foreign Gods likewise were potent, and among the Jews the Tetragrammeton played a corresponding role. To drive out demons the Hellenistic Jews combined the pronunciation of magical words with the use of the phylactery[2].

Like demons, ghosts could be driven out by means of these books of magic. Lucian[3] recounts the tale of Arignotus the Pythagorean, who had rendered a house in Corinth habitable once more by driving out the grim and formidable apparition that had been haunting it. He did it by taking the considerable number of Egyptian works on the subject which he possessed to the house by night. As he sat on the floor reading from them, the spirit made its appearance, only however, to be driven into a corner of a dark room and made to disappear by means of a most appalling adjuration uttered in the Egyptian tongue.

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1. Symposiac, VII 5, 4.
2. L. Blau, Das Altjüdische Zauberwesen, Strassburg i.e.1898, p.112;from Papyr. Paris, ll. 3009 ff.; A. Dietrich, Abraxas 138ff.
3. Lucian, The Liar 31; trans. Fowler and Fowler, Oxford 1905.

Other uses of magical treatises were to drive off reptiles[1]; to render oneself invisible[2]; to blast an enemy[3]; to bring a man and a woman together in marriage[4] or to separate them; to kindle the fire of an altar[5]; to expiate prodigies[6]; and to obtain omens together with their meanings[7].

A factor in the production and use of books of magic was the failure of sacrifices as a means of expiating prodigies or warding off sickness. In a papyrus of the second century A.D.[8] there is an effort towards a more effective means than votive offerings of winning and keeping the favor of the Egyptian Imhotep, whom the Greeks identified with the God of medicine. The writer of the papyrus had in his possession an old book which apparently had been found in the reign of Nectanebo (B.C.340). This book, which told the story of Imhotep, he had begun to translate into Greek, but feeling unequal to the task, he determined to wait for the caution and favorable occasion of old age; but after three years his mother fell victim to a quartan fever and was healed by the God; then he himself was suddenly seized with a pain in his right side, and he and his mother both went to the God. As he lay delirious with suffering, "someone whose height was more than human, clothed in shining raiment and carrying a book in his left hand", appeared to him in a dream, and, after merely looking at him three times from head to foot, disappeared. His mother also, who had been watching by his side, had seen the dream in the form of a vision. When she tried to awaken him to tell him of it, she found that the fever had left him. In gratitude they made

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1. Lucian, The Liar 12.
2. Papyr. "W", Leemens, l. c.
3. Plato, Rep. 364 E.
4. Blau, p. 96-101.
5. Pausanias, Description of Greece, V. 27, 5-6.
6. Oxyr. Papyr. No. 885, G. and H. Vol.VI.
7. Oxyr. Papyr. No. 886, ib.Vol.VI,p.201.
8. Oxyr. Papyr. No.1381, G.and H.Vol.XI, p.221 ff.

sacrifices to the God; but through the priest they were informed that he did not care for them, but wanted instead the fulfillment of the promise made long before to translate the book.

To be sure this was in part a device to win confidence in and authenticate the book. Nevertheless there was at bottom a genuine conviction that to write the deeds of a God was a better way of honoring him for benefits received than votive offerings. "For", says the translator, "every gift of a votive offering or sacrifice lasts only for the immediate moment, while a written record is an undying meed of gratitude, from time to time renewing its youth in memory. Every Greek tongue will tell thy story, and every Greek man will worship the son of Ptah Imouthes. Assemble hither, ye kindly and good men; avaunt ye malicious and impious! Assemble all ye who by serving the God have been cured of diseases, ye who practice the healing art, ye who will labor as zealous followers of virtue, ye who have been blessed by great abundance of benefits, ye who have been saved from the dangers of the sea. I now propose to recount his miraculous manifestations, the greatness of his benefits".

(b) Influence of the Graeco-Roman use of books of magic in Christianity. When it is remembered that the composition of this work took place not later than the early part of the second century, and that it may even belong to the first, the place for a book like the Gospel of Mark, which in like manner recounted the miraculous manifestations and greatness of the benefits of Jesus, is readily seen. The episode at Ephesus which is described in Acts 19:11-20, when read in the light of the use of the Ephesian Grammata, is a piece of direct evidence from the New

Testament itself for considering the Graeco-Roman belief in the magical efficacy of books of magic as a genetic factor in the veneration which made sacred the books of the Christians[1]. When the Seven sons of Sceva had been worsted by the man out of whom they were attempting to drive an evil spirit, great awe came over all, Greeks as well as Jews, so that the name of the Lord Jesus came to be held in high honor. Then "a number of people who had practised magic brought out their books and burned them publicly. The value of these was estimated and found to be ten thousand dollars". Now books may be burned, but ideas are not so easily disposed of; moreover, the account emphasizes the fact that these people acknowledged in the name of the Lord Jesus a superior potency. This was what made them willing to burn their books: they felt that something more powerful was being offered to them: the burning of their magical books did not necessarily mean more than that they had lost confidence in those particular books. The bearing of this fact upon the history of the New Testament is evident at once upon reflecting that after the publication of Matthew's work the Gospel of Mark had difficulty in maintaining itself. In such a situation as that in Ephesus its emphasis upon Jesus as the victor over demonic powers would be an important asset.

In the days of Origen it was possible to confront the claims made in behalf of rival Gods of healing with the manifest fact from the Gospel narratives that the works of Jesus were with pwer[2]. Celsus had insisted that a great number, both of Greeks and of Barbarians had seen Aesculapius himself, and not a mere phantom, "healing and doing good and

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1. These words were used by Clem. of Alex. He explained them to mean that divine things have been arranged in a harmonious order (Strom. V, viii).
2. Cels. II 73.

foretelling the future[1]". Attacking the claims made for Jesus, he pointed out further Antinous, the favorite of Hadrian, who had been given divine honors in Egypt[2]. Origen's reply was that Antinous had not even performed miracles during his life time, and that his fame was due to the magical arts and rites of the Egyptians who knew how to set up demons claiming to be prophets[3]. Mere healing of the body, moreover, and foreknowledge of the future, apart from virtue were things indifferent[4].

To the moral test Origen could also point in reply to the charge that the discourses recorded in the Christian Scriptures were "common" in style: they were filled, none the less, with power as if they were spells, and they were able at once to convert multitudes from licentiousness, wickedness, and cowardice to a better life, regular and courageous[5]. In the eyes of opponents like Celsus they were but barbarous books containing the names and marvellous deeds of demons[6]; but the Christian urged the success of the Word and the rapidity with which it was received; and more important was the fact of Christ, whose coming had for the first time made it possible to exhibit the proofs of divine inspiration. To read the Scriptures was to be convinced that they were not the compositions of men[7].

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1. Cels. III 24.
2. Cels. III 36.
3. Cels. III 36.
4. Cels. III 24.
5. Cels. III 68.
6. Cels. VI 41.
7. De Princip. IV 1, 2 and 1, 6.

The book in honor of Imhotep, however, had also had a similar effect; for when king Nectanebo had read it, he was "quite amazed at the divine power of the story", so that he assigned to each of the twenty-six priests who conducted the God from Heliopolis to Memphis the post of prophet and gave Aesculapius (Imhotep) himself thirty aurae of grain land. Apart from their association with the power of the name of Jesus, the Scriptures would therefore have been at a much greater disadvantage in their competition with Graeco-Roman writings making similar claims; but when Jesus as Lord was victorious, so also were they. Relying on Jesus the Christian could exclaim, "Fly, hateful spirit! Christ pursues thee; the Son of God and the Holy Spirit have outstripped thee", quoting withal the beginning sentences of the Gospel of John[1].

In so far also as the Christian books were translations, they were still more effective on account of the strangeness and the consequent prestige of their originals. The actual incantations to be effective had to be left in the original tongue[2], and the same principle operated in the case of the versions from the Greek. For example, in the Papyrus of London and Leyden (3rd century A.D.), which is written in Demotic, the formulae of incantation are kept in the Greek[3].

III. Books for use in the future life.

(a) The Egyptian Book of the Dead. No matter how often magical formulae might be effective against the demons of sickness and disaster which tormented the ancient world, there was one catastrophe against which they were unavailing: the end of all men was death. And yet if

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1. Oxyr. Papyr. No. 1151; G. and H. Vol. VIII; perhaps 5th Cent.
2. Cf. Mk. 5:41, "Taleitha, koum!"
3. F. Ll. Griffith and H. Thompson, The Demotic Magical Papyrus of London and Leyden, London 1904, Cols. 4:1-19; 15:24-31 and 23:7-20.

books of magic were so useful in this life, might they not aid the soul in facing the dangers of the unseen world also? For to the majority of people in the ancient world death was by no means the end of man; and the question of an existence at all in the future, although of course acute, was not the crucial one. The real problem was how to attain a happy immortality. It was a matter of daily experience that men even in this world frequently missed the path that led to a satisfying life, and thereby lost themselves in wretchedness and despair. Disease, disaster, and death itself, were regarded as punishments for wickedness. If this was the state of affairs on earth, what further possibilities of losing one's way and what greater terrors might await one in the unseen world? In the attempt to anticipate these unknown dangers and to provide a safe journey to the realms of the Blessed, certain formulae were provided.

In Egypt these formed the foundation of the Book of the Dead. The intention of the book may be stated from the rubric of the first chapter of the Papyrus of Ani (19th Dynasty, 1350- about 1150 B.C.): "If this book is known upon earth or inscribed on the coffin, he (the deceased) will come forth by day in all the forms he pleases, and return to his place without hindrance: there shall be given to him bread and beer and flesh upon the table of Osiris. He shall enter in peace into the Sechet-Aalu (the Elysian Fields) to learn the decree of the God who is in Tattu (the land of Osiris). And measures of corn shall be given unto him, for he shall be as vigorous as he was upon earth. And he will do all that he wishes, like those Gods who are in the Tuat (the Nether-world), in strict conformity to Law an infinity of times"[1].

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1. H. M. Tirard, The Book of the Dead, London, S.P.C.K. 1910, p. 53..

The conception which underlay the use of the Book of the Dead was that the knowledge or possession of it through its inscription on the walls of tombs, on coffins, on, or within, the bandages of mummies, or in images of Osiris, the deceased would have not only a guide book to the unseen world, but life itself. To the man who was "of true voice", that is, justified, it was "the book of perfecting the deceased". Its use gave him such power that if he uttered a command it was executed by the ushabti, or answerers, who fulfilled his every wish, and even the Gods could not resist. Hence the Book of the Dead was buried with the deceased, most of its collection of prayers being supposed to be spoken to him or by him in the other world. A small portion of the book was porbably intended to be recited at the funeral, but as a whole it was not a book of ritual. Instead, it was a book for the individual, which provided for all possible contingencies. Whether he wished to realize some ideal or gain some special privilege, or whether he found himself in unexpected danger, "probably without previous learning or training, the mere possession of this book would bring to his lips those magical words of power which would protect him from all his enemies, and even constrain the Gods themselves to serve him"[1].

For a long time the material of the Book of the Dead probably existed orally; but when once the priests began to be doubtful about their meaning they were written down. One version of the Sixty-fourth Chapter was "found" B.C. 4266 beneath the Hennu boat by the foreman of the builders, while the other was inscribed upon a block of ironstone by Herutataf, son of Khufu, B.C. 3733[2]. As the centuries and the

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1. Tirard, p. 56.
2. E. A. W. Budge (trans.), The Book of the Dead, London 1898, Intro. p. XLV-XLVII.

milleniums passed, the collections were augmented, and the Book of the Dead passed through a series of recensions. Each of these exhibits peculiarities which reflect the religious views of the time when it was written[1], and since the student of the canon of the New Testament must reckon with the earlier development of contemporary religious beliefs and practices as influences upon that history, it is of interest to compare the recensions in use in the 21st and 22nd Dynasties with that of the Saite period.

In the 21st Dynasty the contents of the Book of the Dead were not uniform, some of the papyri being filled with religious compositions which are never to be found in the older works, and in the next Dynasty a series of compositions referring to the offerings which were to be made to the Gods of the Underworld were employed. Although these had nothing whatever to do with the Book of the Dead, in the opinion of the scribe they were equally efficacious. Moreover, copies of selections of chapters were used, and the chapters themselves in the book as a whole had no fixed order. During the interval down to the 26th Dynasty the fortunes of the Book of the Dead were affected by the decline of the power of the priests of Amen; but in the Saite period (663-525 B.C.) the general revival of ancient religious customs directed attention to the confused state of the texts. The scribes of the period formed a king of canon, that is, they arranged the chapters in an order which has few exceptions. And yet this did not prevent the inclusion of four chapters (CLXII-CLXV) which had no counterparts in the earlier period[2].

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1. Budge, Intro. p. LXVIII.
2. Budge, Intro. p. LXV-LXIX.

In the Ptolemaic period the selection of chapters was remarkably full, but towards the end of that period it was more usual to inscribe upon papyri a number of short religious works which had been composed presumably by priests, than to use the chapters of the old recensions: only the essential portions of the older works were used, for while the belief in a future life continued, neither those who were employed to cut or paint the ancient texts upon stelae and coffins, nor those who employed them, had an exact knowledge of their meaning. One of the new texts was the "Book of Breathings"[1]. This book was written by Thoth himself, the most mighty God. Its promise was: "Then doth thy soul breathe for ever and ever, and thy form is made anew with life on earth; thou art made divine along with the souls of the Gods, thy heart is the heart of Ra, and thy members are the members of the great God[2]". It is an epitome of all that the Egyptian hoped to obtain in the "land of eternity".

Belonging to the Roman period also are a number of small rolls of papyri in hieratic, the object of which was to secure the goods of the next world with the smallest amount of writing possible and at least expense[3].

That the use of the Book of the Dead continued in the early centuries of the Christian era is shown by the fact that on a coffin in Paris, which was probably made about the end of the second century of the Christian era, are written a number of texts which are as old as the time of the pyramids at Sakkara[4]. The hope of immortality of which the Book of the

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1. Papyr. of Kerāsher, Brit. Mus. No. 9995; trans. Budge, Intro. p. CXCV-CCII.
2. Budge, Intro. p. CXCVII.
3. Budge, Intro. p. LXXII.
4. Budge, Intro. p. LXXII.

Dead and kindred literature was a product, and in the development of which these sacred books, in turn functioned, survived the political and linguistic changes which came over Egypt during the centuries immediately preceding and following the birth of Christ, and became a powerful factor in the current demand for assurance as to the future life. That fact alone would have made these sacred writings important as a preparation for the study of the function of sacred books in early Christianity; but besides all this, they exerted a strong, direct, and tangible influence in that, since they were written in an archaic, and hence mysterious language, they commanded the more veneration and served, by virtue of the accumulated prestige of milleniums, to authenticate the newer religious books, many of which came into being about the very same Gods with whom the ancient literature had been concerned. Furthermore, the tradition of mystery which had been associated with the use of the Egyptian sacred books was a contributing factor in the development of a similar tendency in early Christianity and its contemporary religions; for the Book of the Dead, being a very great mystery, had to be guarded carefully from the sight of unauthorized persons, especially those ignorant folk who dwelt in the papyrus swamps of the Delta[1].

(b) The Orphic-Pythagorean Hades-Books. Egyptian influence was only one branch of the stream of life which flowed into early Christianity. Among the Greeks books for the use of the dead were also written. Very important from the standpoint of Greek influence upon Christianity are the Orphic tablets. Orpheus, according to Pausanias, had surpassed his

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1. Book of the Dead, Chap. CXC.

predecessors in the beauty of his poems and had attained to great power because he was believed to have discovered the rites of the Gods and purifications for unholy deeds and remedies for diseases and for averting the divine wrath[1]. As one of the pioneers of civilization, he was believed to have taught men the arts of medicine, writing and agriculture. The Orphic religion was a combination of the Thraco-Phrygian religion of Dionysus with the tendency, developed by intercourse with Egypt and the East, and between the different parts of Greece itself, to philosophical speculation on the mutual relations between the numerous Gods. This phase of Orphism was closely analogous to Pythagoreanism[2]. The goal of Orphism as a religion was the escape of the soul, tainted as it was with original sin and imprisoned in the body, by a series of transmigrations from this "circle of generation".

At Sybaris, a city of Magna Grecia on the Gulf of Tarentum, and a seat of the Orphic brotherhoods, were found six Orphic tablets of the fourth or third century B.C. They were buried with the dead, one of them being found rolled up and placed in a hexagonal cylinder hanging from a delicate gold chain, which was doubtless worn as an amulet by the dead person. The translation of this, which is known as the Petelia tablet, follows:

> "Thou shalt find on the left of the house of Hades a well-spring,
> And by the side thereof standing a white cypress.
> To this well-spring approach not near.
> But thou shalt find another by the Lake of Memory,
> Cold water flowing forth, and there are guardians before it.
> Say: 'I am a child of earth and of Starry Heaven;
> But my race is of heaven (alone). This ye know yourselves,
> And lo, I am parched with thirst and I perish. Give me quickly

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1. Paus. IX 30, 12.
2. J. H. Freese, art. "Orpheus", Ency. Britt. 11th ed.

The cold water flowing forth from the Lake of Memory'.
And of themselves they will give thee to drink from the holy well-spring,
And thereafter among the others shalt thou have lordship..."[1].

The function of these tablets was to enable one to escape from the "circle of generation":

"I have flown out of the sorrowful weary wheel.
I have passed with eager feet to the circle desired.
I have sunk beneath the bosom of Despoina, Queen of the underworld.
I have passed with eager feet from the circle desired.
Happy and blessed one thou shalt be God instead of mortal".[2]

In order to attain this blessed state the soul had to have paid the penalty for its unrighteous deeds and come a suppliant to holy Phersephoneia[3].

That tablets placed in the hand of the dead person served not only to give directions in Hades, but also as a certificate of purity is shown by the tablet of Caecilia Secundina which was found in Rome, probably in one of the ancient tombs on the Ostia road, and which is dated by Comparetti in the second or possibly first century A.D.[4]:

"She comes from the pure, O pure Queen of those below
And Eukles and Euboleus.--Child of Zeus, receive here the armour
Of memory ('tis a gift songful among men)
Thou Caecilia Secundina, in due rite to avert evil forever".

This tablet is important in that it reveals the confidence placed in the magical power of the written word and the consequent minimum which Christianity had to furnish to its adherents.

Another tablet of the second century, this time from Eleuthernae (?), Crete,[5] shows the persistence of this belief and practice in Christian times. The person entering Hades complains of thirst; the Spring itself

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1. Kaibel, CIGIS 638; the trans. of this and the following is given in Miss Harrison's Proleg. to the study of the Greek Religion, 1903.
2. Compagno tablet (a) CIGIS 641.
3. Compagno tablet (b).
4. Atena e Roma, LIV and LV (1903); Harrison, Append. p. 612.
5. A. Joubin, Bull. de corr. Hell XVII 1893, p. 122ff.

invites him to drink and asks him who and whence he is; he replies, "I am son of earth and of Starry Heaven".

It was especially in the second century of the Christian era that the Orphic-Dionysiac cult enjoyed an extraordinary period of prosperity. The Orphic cult had spread from Thrace to central Greece (especially Athens) and then to Southern Italy, where it had come into contact with the teachings of the Pythagoreans. Then its books had spread over the Hellenistic world[1]. A large number of writings dealing with such subjects as the origin of the Gods, the creation of the world, the ritual of purification and initiation, and with oracular responses, appeared in the name of Orpheus. Together with the poems of Homer and Hesiod they were recited at rhapsodic contests, and the Orphic hymns were used at the Eleusinian mysteries. Onomarcritus, an Athenian (520-485 B.C.), had made a collection of Orphic songs and legends, and in later times the Orphic literature was united into a corpus called "The Orphica". Only fragments remain. It included a collection of Orphic hymns, liturgic songs, practical treatises, and poems on various subjects[2].

The tablets quoted above are thus but fragments of a much larger whole dealing with the Orphic-Pythagorean conception of a Descensus into Hades[3]. Oriental influences had,to be sure, been operative at the beginning, but the Greeks had modified the idea in the course of its development. The specific Greek emphasis was upon the torment of the

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1. A. Dieterich, Nekyia, Leipzig 1893, p. 228.
2. Ency. Britt. art. "Orpheus".
3. Dieterich, Nekyia, p. 108.

wicked in the next world as over against the blessed state of the righteous. This emphasis is a point of differentiation between the Greek apocalyptic and the Jewish[1], which emphasizes the conflict and victory of God over the forces of evil. How it came to bear upon early Christianity is shown by the Apocalpyse of Peter (135 A.D.).

IV. The Descensus literature of the Greeks and Christianity.

The Apocalypse of Peter was a door through which Oriental and Greek conceptions of heaven and hell streamed into Christianity[2]. Its influence upon Christianity is shown by its presence in several lists of canonical books, as, for example, the Muratorian and that of the Codex Claromontanus; by the fact that the same Clement of Alexandria, who, being in constant polemic against the Orphic mysteries, was at pains by the use of Orphic expressions and ideas to show that all of them were really fulfilled only by Christianity[3], made use of it and commented upon it as one of the books included in Scripture[4]; by its influence upon passages in the Sibylline Books, the Apocalypse of Paul, the Acts of Thomas, and the history of Barlaam and Joasaph[5]; and finally by the role which it played in the churches of Egypt, Asia Minor, Syria especially, and the West even down to the beginning of the Middle Ages[6].

In the Apocalypse of Peter, the Christian message, "Repent, for the Kingdom of Heaven is at hand" was meeting the Orphic call, "Purify yourselves in order that you may escape the punishment of the underworld[7]". The result was an exceedingly realistic Greek picture of the state of the wicked and the righteous (with emphasis upon the former), which was in

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1. Stählin, Die altchristliche Griechische Litteratur, p. 1214.
2. H. Weinel, Offenbarung des Petrus, in E. Hennecke, Neutestamentliche (Apokryphen, p.317.
3. Dieterich, Nekyia, p. 229; Euseb. H.E. VI 14, 1.
4. Weinel (Hennecke) p. 315.
5. Weinel (Hennecke) p. 318.
6. Weinel (Hennecke) p. 318.
7. Dieterich, Nekyia, p. 228; cf. Apoc. of Pet. Chap. 1 (Aeth.).

turn authenticated by ample use of New Testament Scripture. The judgment scene is depicted after the manner of the Synoptic gospels[1]. In like manner also the place of the righteous is introduced by means of the Transfiguration scene[2].

Of very great importance for an understanding of the reciprocal influence between the New Testament writings and Greek attitudes is the statement at the close of the brief description of Paradise[3]: "Thereupon I was glad, and believed and was confident. And I understood the words which stand written in the book of my Lord Jesus Christ". On the one hand Christianity had books to meet the need of the Greek world, while on the other the Greek spirit and the Greek use of them tremendously heightened the reverence in which they were held. In the words of Dieterich[4], "As once the Pythagorean - Orphic cult brotherhoods of the fourth century B.C. placed the verses of their apocalyptic poetry in the grave with their dead, and as the brothers of the same order in Crete in the second century A.D. laid the same verses in the tomb for theirs, so also the brothers of the Christian church in Egypt laid the parts of their holy Scriptures which told of blessedness and eternal torment in the other world in the graves of their dead".

To such men, as to Justin Martyr, the word of Jesus was the power of God[5]: "Brief and concise utterances fell from him, for he was no Sophist, but his word was the power of God". Immediately after thus giving expression to his conviction, Justin went on to quote the teaching of Jesus (largely from the Sermon on the Mount) on adultery and swearing,

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1. Cf. Apoc. of Pet. Chap. 6 (Aeth.).
2. Mt. 17:1ff.; Lk. 9:28 ff.; Mk. 6:2 ff.; Apoc. of Pet. 16.
3. Apoc. of Pet. 16.
4. Dieterich, Nekyia, p.230.
5. Justin, First Apol. XIV.

the call of the unrighteous to repentance, love to enemies, tribute to Caesar, the judgment test, treasure in heaven, and trust in God[1]. To Abercius, Bishop of Hierapolis in Phrygia in the reign of Marcus Aurelius, the Scriptures were the "faithful letters of life". On his epitaph (170 A.D.) he says, "My name is Abercius, the disciple of the Holy Shepherd, who feeds the flocks of his sheep on the hills and plains, and who has great eyes that look into every place. For he taught me the faithful letters of life[2]".

The power with which the words of the Gospel message functioned in the Graeco-Roman world may well be described in the words of two papyri, one of the fifth, and one of the third century A.D.[3]. They give at once the expression and the answer to the cry of the ancients for deliverance from the great twofold curse of sickness and death. The first, a medical papyrus, much broken at the beginning, runs: "..... men met us in the desert and said to the Lord, 'Jesus, what cure is possible for the sick?' His answer was, 'I gave olive oil and poured forth myrrh to them that believe in the name of the Father, the Holy Spirit and the Son'".

The second gives the answer of the Christians to those who stood in terror of the last great catastrophe: "These are the words, the..... ...which Jesus, the living Lord (?) .....And Thomas also said to them, 'No one who hears these words shall ever taste death'".

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1. Ib. Chaps. XV, XVI, XVII.
2. Nunn, Christian Inscriptions, S.P.C.K. 1920, p. 23-24.
3. Fifth century: Oxyr. Papyr. No. 1384, G. and H. Vol. XI, p. 238-241; third century: Oxyr. Papyr. No. 654, C. and H. Vol. IV (1903) p.3.

CHAPTER IX

ECLECTIC PHILOSOPHY AND GRAECO-ROMAN SACRED BOOKS

The increasing prevalence of superstition with reliance upon miracle for the healing of diseases, and the multiplication of myths with confidence in the supernatural for salvation, which were so characteristic of the centuries immediately preceding and following the beginning of the Christian era, were due primarily to two causes. In the first place the decadent religions of the Greeks and the Romans, now frequently objects of derision, but subject none the less to the inexorable demand of the ancient world for some spiritual authority to satisfy men's inner life, were giving way to a stream of new religions from the Orient: Mithra, Magna Mater, Star Worship, Isis and Osiris, to mention only a few; and the love of the Greek for an earthly existence was passing into the quest for salvation from trouble and death by way of the Supernatural.

Meanwhile, in an age when everything in the realm of the religious emotions was in flux, Philosophy was no longer able to furnish the assurance demanded. The second cause of the rise of religious feeling was due to the culmination of the undercurrent of skepticism in the validity of reason, which had grown rapidly in the Ethical Period of Philosophy. The result was the examination of previous dogmatic assumptions, and the consequent impeachment of the authority of each School, under the conviction that the intellect of man was so self-inconsistent as not to vouchsafe to him the promised virtue and happiness. No longer confident in his ability to attain present happiness and his soul's salvation by his own strength, man "turned for help both to the religious tradition of the past, and to the revelation

that might come to him in the present. The authority of either was practically the same; for the past was only the crystallization of an ever-present divine spirit. Yet present and past revelations differ in their credentials: the present revelation is an immediate illumination of the spirit; the past is presented in historic records. The Alexandrian school accepted both forms of revelation as the highest source of knowledge"[1].

What was the reaction of this turning to tradition for the authentication of philosophical teachings upon the authority of the tradition itself? To answer this question it will be necessary to examine the use which the philosophers of the time made of the inspired writings of the past.

I. The oracular authentication of a system of philosophy: Apollonius of Tyana, and Neo-Pythagorism.

The theology of Orphism had already engaged the attention of Chrysippus the Stoic (280-206 B.C.). At Alexandria where it was an especially favorite study of the grammarians, it became so intermixed with Egyptian elements that Orpheus came to be looked upon as the founder of Mysticism, and exercised a particularly strong influence on Neoplatonism[2].

The development of Neo-Platonism was preceded by that of Neo-Pythagoreanism (100 B.C.-150 A.D.). Contemporary with Jesus was its great representative, Apollonius of Tyana. His biographer, Philostratus,

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1. H. E. Cushman, A Beginner's History of Philosophy, N.Y. 1910,p.275.
2. Art. "Orpheus", Ency. Britt., 11th ed.

gives the following account of the manner in which he vindicated his philosophy by claiming divine approval for it. Being refused admission to the oracle of Trophonius, the son of Apollo, in Lebadea, Boeotia, on the ground that he was a sorcerer, Apollonius visited the God by night unknown to the priests who had refused him admission. The God enjoyed the visit so much that he rebuked the priests and ordered them to follow Apollonius to Aulis,where he would himself come up out of the earth. Seven days later after a longer delay than any other visitor to the Oracle had ever experienced, Trophonius came up out of the ground at the appointed place, holding a scroll which answered most appropriately the question which Apollonius had put to him: "O Trophonius, what system of philosophy do you consider soundest and purest?" The scroll, Philostratus informs us, contained the precepts of Pythagoras, showing that the oracle agreed with that philosophy. In his day the scroll was preserved in Antium, a seaside city of Italy,which was held in great respect on that account. It was the theory of Philostratus that the scroll in later years had been brought to the Emperor Hadrian together with certain letters written by Apollonius. It had been left by the Emperor in his palace at Antium[1].

By reference to a written revelation the Neo-Pythagorean system was thus authenticated as a whole. Yet, paradoxically, its followers did not feel Apollonius to be any less the possessor of revelatory powers. His biographer states that he was greatly inclined to the science of future events. Iarchus, the Indian Sage, in congratulating Apollonius upon being gifted with the powers of the Pythian Apollo and upon his

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1. Chas. P. Eells, The Life and Times of Apollonius of Tyana, rendered into English from the Greek of Philostratus the Elder, Stanford U. Publ., Univ. Ser., Lang. and Lit. VOL. II, No. 1; VII, 19-20.

possession of the necessary qualifications of purity of mind and body and altruism of purpose in the practice of the art of divination, referred to the fact that one so endowed "must prophesy in purity befitting to himself and the sacred tripod which he bears in his bosom", and said to him, "So it is not strange that you have such a grasp of this science, when you carry so much of the immortal ether in your soul"[1]. The same man who taught the precepts of Pythagoras also foresaw the future by divine inspiration.

Back of the attempt to reinforce the inspiration of present teachings by means of the authority of an older system of philosophy, and then to reverse the process of authentication by obtaining present oracular approval for the same philosophy was the demand for assurance. This demad was expressed by Philostratus in his "Lives of the Sophists", written A.D. 230-238. He commended the Sophist of the old school as over against the newer philosophical vogue of disclaiming any sure knowledge of that whereof he spoke: "The Sophist of the old school assumes a knowledge of that whereof he speaks. At any rate he introduces his speeches with such phrases as 'I know', or 'I am aware', or 'I have long observed', or 'For mankind there is nothing fixed and sure'. This kind of introduction gives a tone of nobility and self-confidence to a speech and implies a clear grasp of truth[2]".

In comparing the method of the philosophers with that of the sophists, he said, "The method of the philosophers resembles the prophetic art which is controlled by man and was organized by the Egyptians and

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1. Ib. III 42.
2. Philostratus, Lives of the Sophists, trans. by W. C. Wright, Loeb 1922, Philostratus and Eunapius, Bk. I, p.5.

Chaldeans, and, before them, by the Indians, who used to conjecture the truth by the aid of countless stars; the sophistic method resembles the prophetic art of soothsayers and oracles" (l.c.).

There was a tradition which represented Pythagoras as receiving at Babylon the teaching of the Magians. Although this is impossible of verification, it is nevertheless true that those who in the first century tried to revive his teachings were Orientals. Apollonius was from the province of Cappadocia, which had received a peculiarly strong Iranian influence. Neo-Pythagoreanism was the first Greek system to express the principle of authority in the form of a divine revelation, and in this especially it was inspired by Zoroastrianism. Its saints were divinely favored men who had the intuition of the divine good mind[1]. This is why Philostratus could compare the method of the philosophers with the prophetic art.

II. Neo-Platonism and the paradox of independence and authority.

Even easier was it to look to Egypt for divine authentication of philosophy. There the actual presence of so many monuments thousands of years old furnished an extraordinary stimulus to the pseudepigraphic imagination. The case of Amenhotep, a famous official under Amenhotep III (1411-1375 B.C.) is typical. He maintained the office of chief of the prophets of the temple at Athribis and enjoyed a great reputation for wisdom. On the temple of Der el Medineh at Thebes an inscription says of him, "His name shall abide forever, his sayings shall not perish". Of himself he says, "The Good God, King of Upper and Lower Egypt...praised me. I was appointed to be inferior king's scribe; I was

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1. See H. E. R. E., art. "Zoroastrianism".

introduced to the divine book, I beheld the excellent things of Thoth; I was equipped with their secrets; I opened all their passages; one took counsel with me on all their matters". Amenhotep's fame did indeed continue: an eighteen-line Greek scrawl on a limestone ostracon, possibly a pseudepigraphon, containing nine fragmentary sayings is ascribed to him. It dates from the third century B.C.[1].

At Alexandria the lines crossed between Jew and non-Jew, Christian and non-Christian, Neo-Pythagorean and Neo-Platonist. Thus it happened that Moses shared with ancient Egyptian sages the fame and prestige due to antiquity. Numenius of Apamea in Syria, Neo-Pythagorean, and forerunner of the Neo-Platonists, flourished during the latter half of the second century A.D. In speaking of Jannes and Jambres as Egyptian sacred scribes, who were judged to have no superiors in the practice of magic, he said, "So these were the men chosen by the people of Egypt as fit to stand beside Musaeus, who led forth the Jews, a man who was most powerful in prayer to God; and of the plagues which Musaeus brought upon Egypt, these men showed themselves able to disperse the most violent[2]. As quoted by Eusebius from a statement of Clement of Alexandria, Numenius even declared, "For what is Plato, but Moses speaking Attic Greek[3]?" The eclecticism of Numenius can best be expressed in his own words as given by Eusebius[4]: "But when one has spoken upon this point, and sealed it by the testimonies of Plato, it will be necessary to go back and connect it with the precepts of Pythagoras, and to appeal to the nations of good repute, bringing forward their rites and doctrines,

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1. Breasted, Ancient Records of Egypt, Vol. II, p. 371-374.
2. Eusebius, P.E. IX viii. E. H. Gifford trans., Oxford, 1903.
3. P. E. IX, vi.
4. P. E. IX, vii.

and their institutions which are formed in agreement with those of Plato, all that the Brachmans and Jews and Magi and Egyptians arranged". As an "excellent interpreter of Plato" and as exponent of Pythagorean teachings, he also in many passages of his writings expounded utterances of Moses and the prophets, interpreting them allegorically[1]. He gave a description of the formation of Serapis[2]; and in the third book of his treatise about the Good, he related a story about Jesus, without, however, mentioning his name[3].

To realize the significance of all this in relation to the function of sacred books in early Christianity and among contemporary Greeks and Romans in authenticating philosophical systems, it is necessary to reflect that Origen, like Plotinus, the founder of the Neo-Platonic system,[4] was a pupil of the celebrated Ammonius Saccas, and that he made a thorough study of the books of Plato and Numenius, and of the Stoics and Pythagoreans; and it is necessary to consider further that the way for such use of the books of Moses and the prophets had been prepared. This is shown by a statement from Pophyry (born 233 A.D.) to the effect that the partisans of Numenius were not far from the truth in their assumption that in the Odyssey of Homer Odysseus is the representation of a man who has passed through repeated incarnations[5].

For Plotinus himself, to be sure, a vehement claim of originality was made by Porphyry[6]. Moreover, the fact that Amelius, a disciple of Plotinus, wrote as many as forty books to refute the work of Zostrian,

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1. Origen, Cels. IV 51. 2. Cels. V 38. 3. Cels. IV 51.
4. Born in Egypt ca. 203 A.D.
5. Porphyry, De antro nymph. c. 34; K. S. Guthrie, Numenius, the Father of Neo-Platonism, Alpine, N. J., 1917, p. 38.
6. Porphyry, Life of Plotinus XXI; K. S. Guthrie, Plotinus' Complete Works, London 1918, Vol. 1, p. 30.

while Porphyry himself demonstrated by numerous proofs that this alleged Zoroastrian book was both recent and apocryphal[1], shows a lively sense of independence. And yet in the case of Plotinus the function of prophet was fused with that of philosopher, in that he used to predict what each of the young people who were in touch with him was to become[2]. In a chapel of Isis in Rome an Egyptian priest evoked Plotinus' guardian divinity[3], and he himself called the hierophants who made use of the mysterious figures in the sanctuary wise interpreters[4]. Finally, in the very next paragraph following upon his vindication of the originality of his master, Porphyry calls upon Apollo (the same God who had said that Socrates was the wisest of men) for a testimonial. Amelius, having consulted the Oracle to discover what had become of the soul of Plotinus, found that by his kindness, affability, gentleness, and purity of soul, his master had liberated himself from the bitter waves of this cruel life. He had been a divine man, who at least four times in this life had reached the goal of union with God. His guardian divinities had frequently restored him to the right path when he strayed from it, so that it might truthfully be said that he had composed his works while in contemplation of them. Now, having taken off the vesture of the body, he was with Plato, Pythagoras, and other sages enjoying the perpetual blessedness granted to them by the divine goodness[5].

Porphyry himself wrote a treatise entitled, "Of the Philosophy to be derived from Oracles". As quoted by Eusebius[6] it is evidence of primary

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1. Ib. XVI; Guthrie, Vol. 1, p. 22.
2. Porphyry, Life of Plot. XI; Guthrie Vol. 1, p. 18.
3. Ib. X; Guthrie, Vol. 1, p. 17.
4. Plot., Sixth Ennead, Bk. IX, "Of the Good and the One", 11; Guthrie, Vol. 1, p. 171.
5. Porphyry, Life of Plot., XXII and XXIII; Guthrie, Vol. 1, p.31-34.
6. Eusebius, P. E. IV 7; trans. by Gifford.

importance of the function of inspired writings as the basis of assurance in an eclectic period of philosophy. "Sure then and steadfast is he who draws his hopes of salvation from this as from the only sure source...And our present collection will contain a record of many doctrines of philosophy, according as the Gods declared the truth to be; but to a small extent we shall touch also upon the practice of divination, such as will be useful both for contemplation and for the general purification of life. And the utility which this collection possesses will be best known to as many as have ever been in travail with the truth, and prayed that by receiving the manifestation of it from the Gods they might gain relief from their perplexity by virtue of the trustworthy teaching of the speakers". Such was Porphyry's reverence for the oracles that he considered it impious to add to or to take from their meaning, confining himself to correcting an erroneous phrase or defective meters, or striking out what did not conduce to the purpose. Moreover, he enjoined secrecy as urgently as any hierophant of the mysteries might have done.

He also found the Orphic hymns useful in setting forth the attributes of Zeus, proving that he was the mind of the world and that he created all things therein and contained the world in himself:

> "Zeus was the first, Zeus last, the lightning's lord,
> Zeus head, Zeus centre, all things are from Zeus.
> Zeus born a male, Zeus virgin undefiled;
> Zeus the firm base of earth and starry heaven;
> Zeus sovereign, Zeus alone first cause of all:
> One power divine, great ruler of the world,
> One kingly form, encircling all things here,
> Fire, water, earth, and ether, night and day;
> Wisdom, first parent, and delightful Love:
> For in Zeus' mighty body these all lie"[1].

All this and much more Porphyry allegorized to his purpose.

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1. P. E. III 9; trans. Gifford.

The road to heaven, according to an oracle of Apollo was steep and rough, and there were innumerable paths leading thither; these had first been revealed by Egypt, and then from them Phoenicia Assyria, Lydia, and the Hebrew race had learned. This oracle was quoted by Porphyry the philosopher[1].

III. The Hermetica and the attempt to construct a philosophic religion.

Egyptian influence was also very strong on the Hermetists. The Hermetica are Greek and Latin writings which contain religious or philosophic teachings ascribed to Hermes Trismegistos. Most if not all, the extant ones were in existence about 310 A.D. Their writers, among whom Ammonius Saccas must have been one, had received some instruction in philosophy, especially in Platonism. While the teaching of the Hermetists was mainly oral, the teacher sometimes gave the gist in writing, or a pupil would write down the conversation. Their aim was to construct a philosophic religion. Although they recognized no inspired and infallible Scripture, and hence did not allegorize, some of them did feel themselves inspired.

On the other hand they ran true to the prevalent tendency during the Hellenistic period to lean on authority and tradition, and to the syncretistic trend which caused the names of men like Plato and Pythagoras to be venerated to the point of superstition. "Every one must, it was thought, have learnt from some one else whatever wisdom he possessed; it hardly occurred to people that anyone could possibly hit on a truth by thinking for himself"[2]. There was an effort to get at the

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1. P. E. IX 11.
2. See Walter Scott, Hermetica, 1924, Vol. I, Intro. p. 1-111, from which this and the preceding paragraph are condensed.

sources: Plato learned from Pythagoras; Pythagoras had studied in Egypt, and it must have been with the priests. These priests had a collection of sacred books as, for example, the Book of the Dead, said to have been written by Thoth. Written in an unknown script and language, and known only to so few, they must have been very high and holy. They went back to Thoth Trismegistos--the "Very Great-Great" Hermes[1]. The Hermetists, then, thinking their teachings to coincide with the unknown contents of those Egyptian books, could ascribe what they wrote to Hermes, thus gaining attention and authority for them. There was no attempt to deceive, for the inner circles knew the device. The outsider, however, as for example, Lactantius, came to think of their writings as a true record of what Hermes said--Hermes who had attained Gnosis and become a God, and who was represented as talking with his pupils.

Surrounded by sacramental religions and confronted by the prevalent demand of the age for the authority which comes only by way of revelation, the Hermetists also had to claim inspiration. "Be it known", says one of them[2], "that the spirit which God breathes into men of my sort is unfailing". If any defect was to be found with the inspired discourse, the fault was not with God, but with the human being who was in his hands as a defective instrument in the hands of a skilled musician.

Their writings, often handicapped at the outset by a lack of high literary merit, had to compete nevertheless with the masterpieces of Greek philosophical literature. And so, making a virtue of their own

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1. c}c}wr.
2. Libellus XVIII, Scott, Vol. I, p. 274-285; II p. 461-482.

defects the writers went on to depreciate the work of the Greeks. To this end the Hermetists sometimes spoke of the Greeks as foreigners, and pretended that their own writings were but translations from the Egyptian. It was, moreover, only with reluctance that permission had been secured to translate them, for translation ran the risk of greatly distorting the sense of the writings and causing much obscurity; whereas, expressed in the native Egyptian, the teaching conveyed its meaning clearly, and in the very sound of the spoken word the force of the thing signified was at work. By contrast, the speech of the Greeks was devoid of power to convince, and the Greek philosophy was nothing but the noise of talk[1].

Another means of gaining attention and exciting curiosity was secrecy. To appreciate these lectures, whether oral or written, one had to belong to the inner circle. In the Epistle of Asclepius to King Ammon (written in the third century A.D.) the writer admits that while it is weighty, it is not composed in accordance with the opinion of the many; in fact, it contained much that contradicted their beliefs. Hence while those who read the writings of Hermes sympathetically would think them to be simply and clearly written, those who held opposite principles to start with would think that the style was obscure and concealed the meaning[2]. To the device of the exclusive circle of listeners was added the requirement of reverent attention and an injunction to secrecy. In the "Holy Book" addressed to Asclepius by Hermes[3] occur these words of the latter: "It is God that has brought you to me, Asclepius, to hear a teaching which comes from God. My

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1. Libellus XVI, Scott, Vol. I, p. 263 f.
2. Libel. XVI, Scott, Vol. I, p. 263f.
3. Lat. Prolog, Scott, Vol. I, p. 287, 289.

discourse will be of such a nature that by reason of its pious fervor it will be rightly deemed that there is in it more of God's working than in all that I have spoken before,--or rather, that God's power had inspired me to speak". Such a discourse it would indeed be impious to make public through the presence of many witnesses.

Ultimately this body of Hermetic religious philosophy was put together into a corpus. It, however, by no means comprised all the literature that passed under the name of Hermes. Clement of Alexandria mentions forty-two Books of Hermes, which he says were indispensably necessary in the rites of the Egyptians. Thirty-six of these included their whole philosophy; the other six were medical; of the rest he states that one contained the hymns of the Gods, a second the regulations for the king's life, while four were astrological[1].

IV. Philosophy and Religion: Plutarch.

This literature was a very expensive one; and although a Greek like Plutarch felt that the greatest part of the precepts of Pythagoras fell nothing short of the sacred hieroglyphics, the ancient revealed knowledge of Egypt maintained its prestige. Plutarch himself derived the name of the Goddess Isis from the verb "know"[2], and affirmed that knowledge and science belonged more peculiarly to her than any other thing. Even the name of her temple meant, "We shall know true being"[3]. "Moreover", he says, "many have reported her the daughter of Hermes, and many of Prometheus; the latter of which they esteem as the author of wit and forecast, and the former of letters and music. For the same reason also they call the former of the Muses at Hermopolis at the same time Isis and justice, Isis being (as we before said) no other than

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1. Strom. VI, 4. 2. ισ:ιστε from οιδα . 3. Ισειον.

wisdom, and revealing things divine to such as are truly and justly styled bearers and keepers of the sacred robes; and these are such as have in their minds, as in an ark, the sacred doctrine about the Gods..."[1]. As for Osiris, he had shown men the use of grain; he had made laws for them and taught them to honor the Gods; then he traveled all over the world and made it civil, having little need of arms, "for he drew the most to him, alluring them by persuasion and oratory, intermixed with all sorts of poetry and music"[2].

The system of Plutarch is a typical example of philosophy coming to terms with religion. As a "philosopher" Plutarch was anxious above all else to have men entertain right notions concerning the Gods, and thereby to avoid superstition, which was worse than atheism[3]. On the other hand he felt that religion needed philosophy. "And for this reason", he says[4], "we should here make most use of the reasonings from philosophy, which introduce us into the knowledge of things sacred, that so we may think piously of whatever is said or acted in religion"[5]. In his opinion, the ancient theologians, lawgivers, poets, and philosophers were fundamentally at one on the principle that the world is not hurried about by wild chance without intelligent discourse and direction[6].

V. Philosophy, Science, and Poetry.

Philosophy had to come to terms also with science and poetry. Strabo insists that the science of geography is a concern of the philosopher quite as much as any other; for the wide knowledge required to undertake

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1. Isis and Osiris, trans. Goodwin, Vol. IV, p. 65-139.
2. Ib. 13.
3. Ib. 11.
4. Ib. 68.
5. Ib. 68.
6. Plut., Isis and Osiris 48.

a work on geography is possessed solely by the man who has investigated things both human and divine--knowledge of which was said to constitute philosophy[1]. Homer, the founder of the science of geography had been a philosopher, and so also were his successors familiar with philosophy[2].

The ancients, according to Strabo,[3] had asserted that poetry was "a kind of elementary philosophy, which, taking us in our very boyhood, introduces us to the art of life, and instructs us, with pleasure to ourselves, in character, emotions and actions. And", he continued, "our school goes still further and contends that the wise man alone is a poet". It was as wise man and poet divinely inspired that Homer served the philosophers during the period in which Christianity emerged. A single example of appeal to him may be given from Epictetus[4]: "What do you think? Do you not suppose that Homer wrote this that we may learn that those of noblest birth, the strongest and the richest, the most handsome, when they have not the opinions which they ought to have, are not prevented from being the most wretched and unfortunate". Quintillian[5] thus summed the matter up: "With maxims from the poets, not only the compositions of orators are filled, but the books also of philosophers, who, though they think everything else inferior to their own teaching and writings, have yet not disdained to seek authority from great numbers of verses".

VI. The impact on Christianity.

Such was the impact of the writings of the ancients on philosophy at the beginning of the Christian era. It was the authority of old age

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1. Strabo I, 1. 1.
2. Strabo I, 1, 1; I, 1, 2.
3. Strabo I, 2, 3.
4. Bk. IV, Ch. X.
5. Inst. V 11, 39.

both of men[1] and of literature[2]. The result of the impact was to turn the very men who laid claim to present inspiration back to the books of the past for authentication; and while it is true that the Greeks and the Romans had no one fixed canon of Scripture, it is also true that under the influence of the religious movement in philosophy they conceived of the ancient writings to which they appealed as divinely inspired. Nothing was foreign to inspiration: the great Plato himself was considered inspired as if by the Delphic oracle[3].

The impact on Christianity was twofold. In the first place the new religion took over the men of philosophic mind who were thus seeking the authority of religion and its sacred books for the new systems they were compelled to construct; and in the second place it had to furnish sacred books capable of giving the required assurance to the world views men were constructing. The consequence of the former was to introduce into Christianity a great many of the products of Graeco-Roman speculation, all competing for admission into the growing canon of sacred Scripture, plus a state of mind hospitable to an expanding canonical authority; the result of the latter was that the Christians who stood in closest genetic relationship with Judaism insisted upon the priority of the Old Testament, and pointed to Jesus and the written records of his life as the norm[4], and to the Epistles of the Apostles as authoritative; and in conjunction with the developing organization of the church, operated to shrink the expanding canon into comparatively narrow limits.

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1. Quint. XII 4, 2.
2. Velleius Paterculus: Compend. of Roman Hist. Bk. I 5.
3. Quint. X 1, 81.
4. One of which had been inspired by the Logos philosophy of Love, and written that man might have life (Jn. 20:31).

The Gnostic movement was one phase of the collision between these two tendencies. The Gnostics were prolific in the production of revelations. The Pistis Sophia was one such. Of this the First Document[1], which according to Legge[2] is probably taken from documents written by Valentinus himself, and therefore dates before A.D. 160, tells how Jesus spent twelve years -- the Gnostics found the forty days after the Resurrection too short a period for the great mass of "knowledge" which had to be "revealed" -- teaching his disciples the mysteries of the heavenly "places". Philip, Thomas and Matthew were the three who, in accordance with the Mosaic number of witnesses, had been appointed to write down these mysteries. "Now therefore", Jesus is represented as saying to them, "ye are the three, those who will write every word which I shall say, with the (things) which I shall do, with the (things) which I shall see, and that I may bear witness of everything of the kingdom of the heavens[3]".

The usual device for stimulating curiosity and for the authentication of such written "mysteries" was that of secrecy and restriction to a favored few. (At the same time such writings could not have served the purposes of Gnostic propaganda, if they had really been kept secret.) In this case the attempt was made to differentiate them from rival "revelation" by producing a hypothetical body of material having its origin with the sinning angels. The kings or tyrants of the signs of the zodiac, who (apparently) had rebelled against Jesus, were punished by him in that he not only altered their course, but took away part of

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1. So termed by Geo. Horner, Pistis Sophia, London 1924, Intro. by F. Legge.
2. Intro. to Horner.
3. Horner, p. 35-37.

their power so that mankind would no longer be able to foretell the future by means of astrology and magic taught them by the sinning angels[1]. Moreover,when these rival "revelations", or even the "mysteries" already recognized, gained too much in popularity to enable the inner circle to distinguish themselves, it was always easy to place them at a disadvantage by putting forth new ones.

To the resulting multitude of "mystery" writings the party more closely in line with the incipient Catholic tradition replied with a series of counter "revelations". One such of about the same date as the Pistis Sophia is the Epistle of the Apostles[2]. It is a Catholic-Apostolic epistle containing discourses of Jesus with his disciples after the Resurrection. It purports to be the book which Jesus Christ revealed to his disciples. It was a revelation to <u>all</u> the Twelve, and for <u>all</u> the churches, East, West, North, and South[3]. Cerinthus and Simon, the enemies of the Lord Jesus, who personified heresy in general, had come to travel up and down through the world, and the book was written to warn all to keep far away from them and to stand true to the gospel[4]. In addition to meeting the Gnostic and Docetic heresies it argued for the Passover date of Easter, and it aimed to encourage those facing martyrdom and to continue the apocalyptic interest.

The Epistle of the Apostles was not itself treated as Holy Scripture: it is not even alluded to in other Christian literature. Indeed, in view of its own use of Scripture, it seems fair to conclude that the fiction of a revealed letter was adopted rather for the purpose

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1. Legge, Intro. to Horner, p. xvii.
2. Carl Schmidt-Isaak Wajnberg, Gespräche Jesu mit seinen Jüngern nach der Auferstehung...Leipzig 1919.
3. Chs. 1 (12) and 2 (13) Ethiop.; Schmidt, 25-26.
4. Ch. 1 (12) Ethiop.; Copt. I, Schmidt p. 32-35.

of impressing upon Christians of all sections of the Empire the heritage of sacred writings which they already possessed. Besides recognizing the Old Testament as Holy Scripture the author had in his possession a complex of New Testament writings corresponding roughly to those of Irenaeus. Yet he was not bound by the letter, and he reshaped the Gospel material freely in accordance with his own judgment. Nevertheless, excepting the non-Gnostic Gospel of the Infancy, he used nothing extra-canonical[1]. The Epistle of the Apostles is, therefore, an example of the manner in which Scripture was employed to satisfy the demands raised by speculation.

Another and quite different reaction to the vogue of books of mysteries and revelations is exhibited by Tatian. In his Address to the Greeks[2] he declares that he cannot praise Heraclitus "for hiding his poem concerning Nature in the temple of Artemis, in order that it might be published afterwards as a mystery". "And those who take an interest in such things say that Euripides the tragic poet came there and read it, and gradually learning it by heart, carefully handed down to posterity this darkness of Heraclitus".

By contrast, Tatian himself, after having gone the rounds of the mysteries, had found light in "certain barbaric writings too old to be compared with the opinions of the Greeks, and too divine to be compared with their errors"[3], and having found complete satisfaction in the writings of the Christians and in the Old Testament, he felt that the matter of principal importance was to endeavor with all accuracy to make it clear that Moses was not only older than Homer, but older than all the writers who were before him[4].

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1. Schmidt-W, p. 248-50.
2. Ch. III; trans. A-NF, Vol. 2.
3. Address to the Greeks XXIX.
4. Ib. XLI.

In a more appreciative spirit Justin Martyr, the teacher of Tatian, expressed the difficulties which he had encountered in his efforts to master the teachings of the philosophers. "Philosophy", he declared, "is, in fact, the greatest possession and most honorable before God, to whom it leads us and alone commends us; and these are truly holy men who have bestowed attention on philosophy"[1]. But the trouble was that the conclusions of the philosophers were mutually at variance, and that instead of investigating for themselves, they had each taken what was handed down to him from his teacher. Not so were the Hebrew prophets. They were more ancient than all "esteemed" philosophers; righteous and beloved by God, they alone had seen and announced the truth to men. Consequently to read their writings would give the knowledge which the philosopher needed to know--provided he believed them[2].

Far greater than the prophets, however, were the words of the Savior; for they possessed "a terrible power in themselves and were sufficient to inspire those who turned aside from the path of rectitude with awe; while the sweetest rest is afforded to those who make a diligent practice of them"[3].

These words of Justin suggest an inquiry into the causes and results of such an appeal to the practical as over against the speculative interests of life. The Graeco-Roman urge for books of prophecy and for writings dealing with the magical art of healing and giving directions for attaining a blessed future life, and the demand for assurance in the midst of confused systems of philosophy, were all constituent elements

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1. Trypho II. 2. Trypho VII. 3. Justin, Trypho VIII.

of the veneration which maintained the popularity of the Hebrew Scriptures and made sacred the books of the New Testament. It now remains to consider the effect of the organized religious activities of the Greeks and the Romans upon the growing canon of the New Testament.

CHAPTER X

THE FUNCTION OF SACRED BOOKS IN THE ORGANIZED ACTIVITIES OF THE GRAECO-ROMAN RELIGIONS

Characteristic of the world in which Christianity emerged was a multitude of private as distinguished from state religious organizations. They were at once the result and the negation of the individualism of the Hellenistic period. Coincident with the breakdown of the Greek city-state, which had hitherto provided for all the religious and social needs of its citizens, and with the sudden mobility of populations attending the conquests of Alexander, these private religious associations were organized to meet the new religious, social, and economic needs of those who were seeking sympathy and support in the every-day affairs of life, and fellowship in the worship of some Deity able to give them victory both in life and death. Naturally these new associations were immediately popular among classes like women, slaves, and foreigners, who had either been excluded from, or at most had participated only to a limited extent in the activities of state religious celebrations; and naturally, also, the old city-state organizations frequently became the model for these more democratic new ones.

I. Sacred books and the organization of private religious associations.

These associations are variously designated. Thiasos is the name of an association in which orgiastic ceremonies such as those of Dionysus and Sabazius were celebrated. The religious eranos was a similar association having an eponymous priest or sacrificers. The members of

these societies were designated as thiasotai and eranistai, but each association was distinguished by the epithet of its patron divinity, as, for example, the Sarapiastai[1]. A third type of such societies was the orgeon. Orgeons were defined by Harpocration (2nd cent. A.D.) as those who meet together for the honor of Gods and heroes[2]. Examples are the orgeons of Aesculapius and orgeons of the Mother of the Gods.

Private religious associations differed from the public cults of the Greek cities in that they admitted women, strangers, and slaves. Their affairs were regulated either by the "law" of the society or by the decree of the assembly. Often the law was proposed, discussed, and adopted as a whole in democratic parliamentary fashion. Then it was usually published. It regulated the conditions of admission to, and exclusion from, the association; the convocation of regular assemblies; the assessment of dues and the means of collecting them; cases of legal arrears and penalties for non-payment; the dues in money or in kind which those who sacrificed in the temple paid; the investment of the income; the conditions of loans made to the members of the society, and the requisite guarantees; the nature and value of rewards decreed to benefactors; the measures to be taken to assure respect for the law, the execution of the decrees, and the punishment of those who had wronged the society[3].

Sometimes, however, the law was given to the society by its founder or reorganizer, who brought it with him from some already established association. In the Mystery Inscription of Andania[4], which

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1. P. Foucart, Des Associations religieuses chez les Grecs, Paris 1873, p. 1-12.
2. F. Poland, Geschichte des Griechischen Vereinswesens, Leipzig 1909,
3. Foucart, p. 13. (p. 13.
4. Dittenberger, Sylloge Inscriptionum Graecarum, 2nd ed. 1900, No. 653 in Vol. II, p. 461-473.

dates 91 B.C., occur the following directions[1]: "Let the priests deliver to the properly constituted officials the books which Mnasistratos has given, and also the rest of the things that have been provided for the mysteries". These books are the same as those spoken of by Pausanias[2]. Their history is as follows: When on account of the refusal of the Messenians, who had been driven out during the war with the Lacedemonians, to settle again in Andania, Epaminondas was at a loss where to found a city that would be a match for the enemy, he received encouragement in a vision of an old man "much like a high priest of the mysteries". At the same time Epiteles, the general who had been charged with the refounding of Messene, was commanded in a dream "whenever he found a yew-tree and a myrtle growing on Mt. Ithome, to dig up the ground between them and save the old woman, for she was worn out and fainting by reason of her long confinement in the bronze chamber". This mysterious command Epiteles obeyed and found a bronze urn. He took it to Epaminondas, who, after sacrificing and praying to the dream, opened it and found a very thin sheet of tin rolled up like a scroll. The scroll was the same which Aristomenes had buried on the loneliest part of the mountain when the fall of Ira was imminent, in order to prevent it from falling into the hands of the Lacedemonians, for in that case Messenia would have been lost forever. On the other hand according to the oracles, if it was preserved, the Messenians would one day recover their country. On it were engraved the names of

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1. Line 12.
2. Pausanias, Description of Greece, IV 20, 2 and 27, 2; trans. J. G. Frazer, Paus. Descr. of Greece trans. with a comment., in six vols., Vol. I, p. 209, 219-20.

the great "Goddesses", and "when the record of the mysteries was found", says Pausanias, "it was copied into books by men of the priestly race".

Here then, there was actually in use in 91 B.C. a sacred writing, which in the days of Pausanias was traced back to the seventh century. The books probably contained directions for the ceremonies, but at the same time the mysteries which had long been interrupted[1] could not be reorganized without them. "It is quite probable", says Foucart, "that the founder of a thiasos or an eranos brought with him the sacred books which he transmitted to his successors, and that he published the law accepted by those who wished to join his cult[2]".

A piece of direct evidence that the founder or organizer of religious associations gave written directions is furnished by Philostratus. At the beginning of his biography of Apollonius he says, "I have collected my materials partly from those cities which cherish his memory, partly from those temples whose antique rites he restored, partly from what others have recorded of him, and partly from the letters which he used to write to kings, professors, and philosophers, to Eleans, Delphians, Indians, and Egyptians, on theology, ethics, customs and laws, in all which matters he corrected any laxity of observance". This is a picture of a first century religious reformer going his rounds in the Graeco-Roman world, leaving behind him a cofrespondence which was long cherished by those whom he had persuaded to reform.

Sometimes the legislator went so far as to presume to prevent changes in his law. In one inscription the law is called "immovable"[3]:

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1. B. C. 637-371.
2. Foucart, p. 14.
3. Foucart, No. 46, l. 104, ἀκινήτῳ.

the association in accepting his bounty--the legislator was often the economic patron--had conceded the title "unchangeable". Yet the presumption to permanence was idle: another inscription[1] of quite early date found at Athens preserves a trace of discord, which, although fortunately ended, shows that these laws were difficult to keep unchanged. It consists of but three Greek words: "Harmony of the thiasos".

To disturb the harmony of an association was a direct violation of the oath taken at initiation; for in some cases besides having one's candidacy officially announced, and passing an examination to determine whether one was pure,pious, and good, and paying the appointed initiation fee, he had to swear to observe the statutes of the society[2]. Thus whether the assembly itself had passed the rules which governed it, or whether it had obtained them from some previously existing society, the members were accustomed to the concept of law, a law which bound them into a brotherhood.

This law they were influenced to respect by the official measures taken to preserve it and make it known. For example, in the first century B.C. inscription of an association devoted to the Dioscuri and Helen[3] there are mentioned among others a guardian of the laws, a teacher, a scribe, and a reader. The title "Guardian of the Laws", is borrowed from the constitution of a city; the teacher was the instructor of the chorus and the dance; the scribe was the secretary in charge probably of the material care of the writings, and under orders of the

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1. Foucart, No. 34.
2. E. Ziebarth, Das Griechische Vereinswesen, Leipzig 1896, p. 141.
3. P. Le Bas et W. H. Waddington, Voyage Archéologique en Grèce et en Asie Mineure (1843-44), Inscr. 163a; notes in Vol. II, p. 82-84.

guardian of the laws; the reader fulfilled functions analogous to those of the similar official in the Christian Church later. "One may conclude", say Waddington and Le Bas, "that there were sacred books in this society which were read aloud during festivals. These books, which without doubt contained the collection of traditions and ceremonies relating to the cult of the Dioscuri, were probably a charge entrusted to the privileged family of Tyndares".

The significance of the law for these religious associations among the Greeks may be illustrated concretely by reference to the inscription of the Iobachoi (ca. 166-176 A.D.), an Athenian cult society of Iobachos (Dionysus)[1]. After the vote had been taken to inscribe the statutes[2], which were to serve for all time[3], upon a tablet, it was announced as follows: "The tablet will be placed upon the pillar, and the statutes will be written upon it; for those in charge will see to it that none of them is violated[4]. By the law thus adopted and published, the life of the individual member was regulated. Of especial interest in this respect is the following: "If anyone begins a quarrel, or is found disorderly, or reclining in another man's place, or has treated rudely or insulted anyone, the one who has been treated rudely or insulted shall produce two sworn witnesses from among the Iobachoi to testify that they heard him being treated rudely and insulted". The punishment in this case was a fine of twenty-five drachmas and exclusion from the meetings until it was paid. In case of a quarrel involving actual physical violence the priest was bound to call a meeting of the society; if guilty, the offender was assessed a fine of twenty-five

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1. Maas, Orpheus, München 1895, p. 41.
2. Ta dogmata.
3. Toutois aei.
4. Maas, p. 20, ll. 29-31.

silver denarii, the same penalty applying to the injured man if he failed to make complaint. Moreover, any member who knew that a meeting for this purpose was being held, and absented himself, was liable to a fine of fifty drachmas. Another offence was to make a speech without permission of the priest[1].

The regulatory "sacred law" governing these religious associations was often largely concerned with the God who was worshipped, or with the men, who, whether princes or private citizens, had become patrons by virtue of their benefactions or other special claims to honor. The same society might bear the names of several such Gods or men, or might contain both the names of Deities and mortals. Sometimes this happened because two or more previously existing societies had amalgamated to form a new one. The process is illustrated by the Orgeon of the Mother of the Gods on the Piraeus. As early as the third century B.C. it permitted to a thiasos of the Syrian Aphrodite the use of its temple, with the result that the two gradually fused so far that the same worshipper called upon and made offerings to the two Goddesses[2].

With the evolution of these societies from their predominant initial emphasis upon religious needs to social and economic interests, the names of persons stand out more and more prominently in their official cult titles[3]. The founder, the economic benefactor, the prince, the political leader, or the otherwise prominent man whom it was found desirable to honor, might have his name added to the name of the cult. Formal honors to those officials who had performed their duties with distinction were frequent. This characteristic made them particularly

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1. Maas, p. 24-27: προσφωνητικοὺς λόγους. On the Iobachoi see art. in Pauly-Wissowa.
2. Maas, p. 75; Ziebarth, p. 140.
3. Poland, p. 78.

welcome to those classes of society shut out from other forms of public recognition.

They were manifestations of the same democratic spirit of brotherhood as Christianity, which consequently had to provide for the same needs which they filled. To meet these needs it had such statutes ("dogmata") as the Ten Commandments and the Sermon on the Mount. On the other hand, the Greek attitude of reverence and habit of obedience to a "sacred law", which had been developed in the cult associations, reacted in favor of the veneration which maintained and completed the process of canonization of the sacred books of the Christians.

This point is of especial importance in evaluation of the influence of such personalities as Paul upon the process of canonization, since the honors bestowed upon leaders of conspicuous power and service also attached to their writings. The regulations of the Greek cult associations to assure harmony in their feasts and meetings, and the custom of decreeing special honors, and even of including the names of conspicuous leaders in the title of the society, are eloquent as a description of the Apollo-Cephas-Paul-Christ Church at Corinth. The reforming activities of Apollonius of Tyana suggest the method of Paul, both in relation to the Synagogue and to the Gentiles; and the brief inscription, "Harmony of the Thiasos", indicates a situation similar to that which required the tact of Titus at Corinth[1].

According to Ignatius[2] the Old Testament was referred to as "the charters". In pleading with the Philadelphians for harmony he said, "But I beseech you to do nothing in factiousness, but after the teaching of Christ. For I heard some men saying, 'If I find it not in the charters[3]

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1. I Cor. 7:13-16. 2. Philad. VIII 2. 3. En tois archeiois.

in the gospel I do not believe'[1], and when I said to them that it is in the Scripture, they answered me, 'That is exactly the question'". "The charters" here probably means the Old Testament[2], and it is an expression of the conviction that the whole Christian message of salvation was already contained in the Old Testament Scripture. It may be assumed that Ignatius had appealed to it, but that his interpretation of the passages in question had not convinced his opponents.

In view of the fact that Ignatius was trying so desperately to bring the churches under control of the bishops it is likely that the Old Testament passages argued about concerned something besides the question of the law-free Gospel as over against the Judaizers. If the attitude of the Greeks towards the law of their religious associations in the region of the churches to which Ignatius wrote may be taken as an indication of the manner in which the Old Testament had bound up with the organized and practical activities of the Christian churches, the appeal to it on the part of those resisting the changes involved in a more complete submission of the local organization to the larger whole is understandable. On the other hand the very argument implies that if Ignatius had been able to convince his opponents that his teaching and his proposals stood in the "charters", the question would have been settled at once. If therefore the Old Testament had not been capable of so varied interpretations, it could not have functioned under these circumstances. As things stood, having become the law of so many groups through the efforts, first of the Jewish missionaries,

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1. W. Bauer in Lietzmann's Hdb. zum NT, Bd. IV translates: Wenn ich es nicht in den Urkunden finde, als Bestandteil nur des Evangeliums glaube ich es nicht.
2. See K. Lake, Apost. Fathers (Loeb) and W. Bauer.

and later of the Christians, it became one of the common bonds, which, together with the New Testament Scriptures, brought the Christian churches together into a larger fellowship.

The writer of First Clement could quote with confidence Isaiah 60:17 as showing that bishops and deacons were not an innovation: they had been written of many years before. Moses, "a faithful servant in all his house", had noted down in the sacred books all the injunctions which were given him, and the other prophets followed him, bearing witness with him to the laws which he had given[1].

First Clement, like Ignatius, did not confine his appeal to the Old Testament. The Master, he reminded his readers, had commanded sacrifices and services, orderly, and at fixed times and hours[2]; and he admonished them to take up the epistle of the blessed Paul the Apostle, written at the very beginning of his preaching. It was thus an appeal to the <u>founders</u> of the Christian brotherhoods in Corinth as over against the pretenders who were now perverting them[3]. Indeed the Apostles, with perfect foreknowledge, had shown that there would be strife for the title of bishop, and had taken precautions against just such a contingency by providing the proper mode of succession[4]. Thus whether it was the Old Testament, the words of Jesus, or the epistles of Paul, capacity to authenticate the growing organization of the Church was one of the factors that maintained or made them sacred Scriptures.

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1. I Clem. XLII and XLIII.
2. I Clem. XL.
3. I Clem. XLVII.
4. I Clem. XLIV.

II. The use of sacred books in the worship of the Greeks and Romans.

(a) The reading of "history", poetry and theology in connection with the sacrifices and games. Thus far the function of sacred books in sanctioning an organization or changes therein has been considered. From among the available evidence the inscription of the Athenian Iobachoi was selected because it shows so completely the position occupied by the "Law" in these religio-social-economic organizations of the Graeco-Roman world. This same inscription will serve as an introduction to the problem of the use of sacred books in worship in these religious groups. In lines 110-115[1] the priest is directed to make the necessary arrangements for the place of sacrificing, for the libation, and for the yearly celebration. In addition, he was required to deliver a laudatory discourse (theologian) in honor of the God, just as Nikomachus, the retiring priest, in his zeal had begun to do. From this it might appear that the panegyric was an innovation on the part of an unusually ambitious priest; yet it proved so immediately popular that it was continued by law. Moreover, this custom had had a long history, and since it was so widely spread it demands an inquiry as to its effect upon the development and use of sacred books.

Philostratus in his Lives of the Sophists[2] says of Gorgias of Leontini (480-ca. 380 B.C.) that "he played a distinguished part at the religious festivals of the Greeks, and declaimed his Pythian Oration from the altar; and for this his statue was dedicated in gold and was set up in the temple of the Pythian God".

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1. Maas, Orpheus p. 26.
2. Gorgias of Leontini, written 230-238 A.D.: I 9.

An inscription of Delos (3/2 cent. B.C.)[1] mentions a certain Heraclitus who had given public readings at Delos, and had recited some poetical work composed in honor of the God.

Dating between 279 and 198 B.C.[2], probably nearer the latter date, is an inscription from Delphi in honor of one Cleochares, the son of Bion, an Athenian who had written for the God a processional song, a paean, and a hymn, in order that the youth might reverence him at the sacrifices of the festival in honor of Apollo. An official bearing the title of chorodidaskalos was elected yearly to teach these compositions to the children.

A poet named Demoteles, who wrote in the first half of the third century B.C., is mentioned in another inscription of Delos for having composed a work dealing with the temple and the city, and for having put into writing the native myths of the Island. Of this Homolle[3] says: "Delos had been celebrated to the point of envy in antiquity: the sorrows of Latona, the birth of Apollo and of Artemis, and the other legends of the sacred Island furnished the material for numerous works in verse and in prose...The hymn of Callimachus[4] entitled 'In Delos' will give an idea of this kind of composition. Demoteles had written on the same subject, and without doubt he lived at nearly the same period as Callimachus".

Delphi shared with Delos the legend of Zeus, Leto, and Apollo. According to an inscription[5] consisting of a paean dated 235-210 B.C. and five hymns[6] dated 185-135, the son of Zeus and Leto occupied the

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1. M. Homolle, Archives des missions scientifiques at litteraires, Paris (continued in Nouvelles archives)XIII(1887)p.417,No.19(Hebac..)
2. Louis Cove, BCH, XVIII (1894)p.71.
3. BCH IV (1880) p. 347.
4. Fl. Alexandria, B.C. 260-240.
5. BCH XVII (1893) p. 565.
6. Pomtow, Rhen. Mus. N.F. XLIX, p. 580 (1894).

sanctuary there by will of the immortals. The poet Aristonous declared that ever since the time the God of the lyre took up his abode in the sacred cave, oracular pronouncements, pure and holy, and always in the midst of terror, came from these underground regions. Then he alluded to the time prior to the establishment of the cult of Apollo when the chthonian divinities gave answers in vague dreams and frightful visions to the pilgrims who had descended into the cave: Apollo had put an end to these infernal terrors by piercing with his arrows Python the serpent.

Another inscription from Delphi dated 150 B.C. decrees honors to Trozanius the historian for having given public readings there during several days from his works[1]. It had been done in a manner worthy of the sacred place.

From the middle of the second century B.C., also, and this time from Delos, there is an inscription which honors Amphicles, musician and writer of verses, who had given concerts and taught the youth to sing the verses to the accompaniment of the lyre "in a manner worthy of the honor due to the Gods and of the Athenian people". His prosodion is given especial mention: the basis of such a lyrical piece was the legend of Latona and the birth of Apollo and Artemis, and a eulogy to the Gods of the Island and to the Athenian people[2].

The Delians also honored Ariston, a young poet (130 B.C.). He had given concerts in the assembly hall and in the theater, and had hymned the praises of Apollo the founder, together with the other Gods in possession of the Island; and he had given public readings from his

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1. Louis Cove, BCH, XVIII (894) p. 77.
2. G. Fougères, BCH, XIII (1899) p. 242-50.

works[1]. It was not so much the merit of these poems, which appear to have been in epic verse, that was considered, as the homage to the Gods, the allusions to local tradition, and flatteries to the Athenian people.

The island of Chios furnishes another example[2]. In date it is not later than the age of Augustus, and may perhaps be as early as the time of Mithradates and Sulla. In reference to games to the muses, which were musical, and in connection with games to Hercules, which were athletic, it mentions the public reading of Agathocles, son Agathocles, and the recitation of epic poetry by Miltiades, the son Dionysius.

Finally, for the Christian period, evidence deduced from Apuleius is to be noticed. In his description of a procession of Isis worshippers he says, "Then came a fair company of youth apparelled in white vestments and festal array, singing both meter and verse with a comely grace, which some studious poet had made in favor of the Muses, the words whereof did set forth the first ceremonies of this worship[3].

To this evidence for the prevalence of the custom of public reading or singing of history, poetry, and theology--evidence which might easily be multiplied--should be added the fact that in the case of the Orphic cult the hymns were gathered into a collection bearing some points of likeness to the Jewish Psalmbook[4], as well as the fact already mentioned that the private religious associations also had their readers with functions analogous to the readers of the Christian church. The fact that the Greeks were accustomed to listen to such reading goes

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1. G. Fougères, BCH, XII (1889) p. 250-51; cf. Maurice Holleaux in Revue des Études Anciennes I (1889) p. 11, No. 11, and Adolph Wilhelm in Archaeologisch-epigrapische Mittheilungen aus Oesterreich XX (1897)p.87.
2. G. Dittenberger, Sylloge Inscriptionum Graecarum, No. 524; Vol. II, p. 176-177, Lipsiae 1900. CIG 2214.
3. Metamorphoses, XI 9; trans. W.Adlington (1566)rev. by S.Gaslee(Loeb 1925).
4. Maas, Orpheus, p. 201-204.

far to explain the ease with which the LXX and later the writings of the Christians made headway among them.

(b) The mystery religions and sacred books. In the mystery religions there was a direct use of sacred books. Philostratus informs us that his hero-philosopher, traveler, lecturer, and reformer, having been equipped by his studies with Iarchus the Indian sage wrote, besides four volumes on divination by astrology, on the subject of sacrifices also: "how they might be made most suitably and acceptably to each of the Gods". Then he adds, "I have discovered his work on sacrifices in many temples, and in many cities, and in many homes of wise men, and why should anyone paraphrase what has therein been reverently expressed by such a man with his usual clearness?"[1]

The custom of keeping such works in the temples is corroborated by Pausanias[2]. "The Pheneatians", he says, "have also a sanctuary of Demeter surnamed Eleusinian, and they celebrated mysteries in her honor, alleging that rites identical with those performed at Eleusis were instituted in their land; for Naus, they say, a grandson of Eumolpus, came to their country in obedience to an oracle from Delphi. Beside the sanctuary of the Eleusinian Goddess is what is called the Petroma, two great stones fitted to each other. Every second year when they are celebrating what they call the Greater Mysteries, they open these stones, and taking out of them certain writings which bear on the mysteries, they read them in the hearing of the initiated, and put them back in their place that same night. I know, too, that on the weightiest matters the Pheneatians swear by the Petroma. There is a round top on

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1. Life and times of Apol. of Tyana, III 41.
2. Description of Greece, VIII, 15, 1ff.; trans. Frazer.

it which contains a mask of Demeter Cidaria; this mask the priest puts on his face at the Greater Mysteries, and smites the Underground Folk with rods". The same writer states that the Lycomids chant the poems of Orpheus at the celebration of their rites. These poems, he declares, although few and short, deserve for poetical beauty to rank next to the hymns of Homer and have received still higher marks of divine favor.

The evidence for the use of sacred books in the Mithraic cults is neither so clear nor so extensive as for the mysteries which have just been mentioned. The Magi of Cappadocia never had a sacred book, but transmitted their religious traditions orally. St. Basil[1], confirmed by Bardesanes and Esnig, says that they had neither books nor teachers, but that the son received the "impiety" from the father.

On the other hand, the Roman cult of Mithras stands in similar relationship to the Avesta as the Graeco-Roman Isis mystery stands to the religion of the Egyptian texts[2]. The relation of the Iranian religion to contemporary philosophy has already been discussed. In the Mithraic mysteries a complete system of cosmography was taught and applied to the soul and its destiny. Derived from oriental sources and popularized by the Stoics, the doctrine of the microcosm with its accompanying astrological doctrines formed part of the common stock of teaching of the mystery religions[3].

In the first place it is to be noted that reference of religious hymns, traditions, and customs to the books of the Persian religions

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1. Ep. 258 ad Epiphanium, cited in Cumont, Textes et Monuments relatifs au culte de Mithra, Vol.I, p.4, note. 2.
2. O. Gruppe, in Iwan Müller, Handbuch der Klassischen Altertumswissenschaft V, 2, 2, p. 1591, München 1906.
3. H. S. Jones, art. "Mithraism" in ERE 10.

was easy because of the fame which they enjoyed. Pahlavi tradition tells of Scriptures in 1200 chapters, and Arab historians refer to a copy inscribed on 12000 cowhides! Various Syriac writers also allude to an extensive sacred book, and Pliny the Elder mentions 2,000,000 verses composed by Zoroaster[1]. According to the Dinkart and later Persian Rivayats there were twenty-one Nasks or Books. King Vishtaspa, Zoroaster's patron, was said to have sent the original copy of the Avesta written in letters of gold to the "Stronghold of the Records" at Persepolis, while another copy was affirmed to have been inscribed on gilded tablets and kept in the "treasury" of the fire-temple at Samarkand. These two copies were destroyed in the invasion of "the accursed Ishkander" (Alexander) when he burned the palace of the Achaemenians at Persepolis and took Samarkand. Considerable portions of the text, however, were preserved in scattered works and in the memory of the priests. King Valkhash (generally identified with Vologeses I) ordered[2] that all the sacred writings should be searched for, and that such portions as were preserved only in oral tradition should again be written down. Artakhshir Pāpakān (A.D. 226-240), the founder of the Sassanian dynasty, continued this work, commissioning the high priest Tansar to collect the scattered fragments. Under Shahpuhr II (A.D. 309-380) a final revision of the Avestan texts was made, and this collection, consisting of a fixed number of books, was declared canonical[3].

Taking account of the fact that in Cappadocia, North Syria, and the west of Asia Minor, the Persian Gods were everywhere adored side by side

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1. H. N. XXXI 1, 2.
2. According to the proclamation of Khusrū Anushirvan, A.D. 531-579.
3. A. V. W. Jackson, art. "Avesta" in ERE 2,3.p. 267.

with the nature deities, and that for a time it seemed as if the Sol Invinctus Mithras would become the Deity-in-chief of the Empire, it is natural to inquire into the influence of the Zoroastrian sacred writings. The Avesta prescribes ceremonies analogous to those which obtained in the mysteries.

In his religious perplexities, Lucian's Menippus had gone to Babylon for help from one of the Magi, Zoroaster's disciples and successors, who could take one to Hades. He found Mithrobarzanes, who, besides other rigorous prescriptions, ordered him to bathe twenty-nine successive mornings. To invoke the spirits Mithrobarzanes apostrophized the rising sun in a long formula[1]. Under the surface of Lucian's parody there appears the attractive power of systems of purifications such as those of the Vendidad. Moreover, it is certain that the Mithraic priesthood had a ritual of Persian origin[2], and this was doubtless believed to have been written by Zoroaster[3].

There is also a considerable body of evidence that hymns were chanted in the Magian ritual. Herodotus says[4] that the Magus sang the genealogy of the Gods[5], which they called an ode[6]. Strabo[7] states that while the sacrifice was being burned they sprinkled oil mixed with milk and honey round about, and with bundles of thin myrtle twigs in their hands they sang songs "a long time". Again, he states that the fire-worshippers entered their temples daily and chanted for about an hour[8]. The youths, under

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1. Lucian, Menippus 3-7.
2. Firmicus Maternus, De err. prof. rel. V 2.
3. Roscher, Lexikon der Mythologie II 2 (1894-1897) p. 3064-65; Porphyr., De antro nymph. 5.
4. Herod I 132, cited by Cumont, Textes et Mon. II, p. 60, note 1.
5. θεογονίην.
6. ἐπαοιδήν.
7. Geog. XV 733 (14) ed. A. Meineke, Teubner 1877, Vol. III, p. 1021.
8. Ib. l. c. (15).

the very best men as teachers, received moral instruction veiled in fables, and learned to honor the Gods and heroes "without songs and with odes[1]". Curtius[2] in describing one of their religious processions says that they carried fire at the front, calling it sacred and eternal, and that the Magi came next, singing songs. According to Dio Chrysostom[3] they sang a wonderful myth (μῦθος) in their hidden mysteries, celebrating their God, the Sun, as perfect and as first charioteer of the most perfect chariot. Of this strong and perfect chariot no one, not even excepting Homer and Hesiod, had sung worthily as did Zoroaster and the young Magians who had learned from him.

A further idea of the content of these songs may be gained from Augustine's attack on Faustus, the Manichaean[4]. "Well mayest thou reject the message of the true God", he says, "as opposed to thy parchments... The fictions of the poets are more respectable than thine, in this at least that they deceive no one; while the fables in thy books by assuming an appearance of truth mislead the childish both young and old, and pervert their minds". The parchments Augustine referred to contained a love-song describing the chief Ruler in perennial majesty crowned with flowers and of fiery countenance and holding a scepter. About him were the twelve seasons, clothed with flowers, filled with song, throwing their flowers at their father's face.

Were, then, these songs and odes transmitted orally, or were sacred books employed in these religious ceremonies? There is one piece of direct evidence from Pausanias[5]. He says, "I have seen another marvel

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1. Ib. l. c. (18). (III, 3, 7.
2. Q. Curti Rufi, Hist. Alex. Mag. Mac., ed. Vogel, Leipzig 1885, p. 78,
3. Dio Chrys., Orat. XXXVI 39.
4. Against Faustus, N-PN-F (1887) Vol. IV, p. 214-15.
5. Descr. of Greece V 27, 5-6; trans. Frazer.

in Lydia, different indeed from that of the horse of Phormis, but like it in partaking of the magic art. The Lydians, who are surnamed Persian, have sanctuaries in the cities of Hierocaesarea and Hypaepa, and in each of the sanctuaries is a chapel, and in the chapel there are ashes on an altar, but the color of the ashes is not that of ordinary ashes. A magician after entering the chapel and piling dry wood on the altar, first claps a tiara on his head, and next chants an invocation of some God in a barbarous and, to a Greek, utterly unintelligible tongue: he chants the words from a book. Then without the application of fire the wood must needs kindle and a bright blaze shoot up from it".

This book may have been the Zend Avesta or some of the hymns which were afterward included in it; but it is to be noted that in this case the predominant element in its use was magical, and, more important, that it was not translated. The Greek quotation of the formula, "Initiate, cattle-stealer, son at the right hand of the August Father"[1] given by Firmicus Maternus shows that some of the liturgical formulas were indeed translated, but on the other hand the point of Lucian's sarcasm would be lost, were it to be assumed that in his day such translation was general: "And the Mede there, Mithras, with the candys and tiara? Why the fellow cannot speak Greek: if you pledge him, he does not know what you mean[2]". The hymns may have been transcribed when the Persian language began to be forgotten, but here again it must be remembered that even in the Mazdeism of the Sassanian period

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1. Or perhaps with Ziegler's emend. "partner of a cattle-stealer": Firm. Mat., De er. prof. rel. V 2, ed. Konrat Ziegler, Teubner 1907.
2. Lucian, Council of the Gods 9; trans. Fowler and Fowler Vol. IV (1905).

(226-641 A.D.) the priests were still compelled to learn very long prayers by heart[1]. As to the "commandments of Mithra" referred to by Julian[2], it would be difficult to show that they were written.

Making all due allowance, therefore, for the possible destruction of a once extensive Mithraic liturgical literature, one is nevertheless, in view of the evidence just presented, drawn to the conclusion that sacred books played a comparatively small part in the organized activities of the Mithraic cult. Consequently it was placed at a disadvantage in competition even with such cults as those of Isis and Orpheus, to say nothing of Christianity. Indeed, this failure of the Mithraic religion to get the old Iranian sacred books translated and accepted by the West must be reckoned as one of the causes of its final absorption.

The disadvantage appears in the reply of Origen to Celsus, who had compared the ladder of the Mithraists with Christian conceptions. Origen asked why he had introduced this comparatively obscure sect: there were other mysteries much more important among the Greeks, such as those at Eleusis and Aegina. Or why had he not instanced the mysteries of the Egyptians, the Cappadocians, the Thracians or the Romans? It was because he could find no aid in those in accusing the Christians. Celsus plainly had struck upon a similarity embarrassing to the Christian apologist; and it is significant that Origen was able to strengthen his inadequate defense by the following appeal: "If one wished to obtain means for a profounder contemplation of the entrance of souls into divine things, not from the statements of that very insignificant sect which he

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1. Cumont, Textes et Mon. I, p. 4, note 2.
2. Cited in Cumont, Textes et Mon., Vol. II, p. 19: Convivium (Caesares) p. 336 C (432, 1 Hertlein).

quoted, but from books--partly those of the Jews, which are read in their synagogues, and adopted by the Christians, and partly from those of Christians alone--let him peruse at the end of Ezekiel's prophecies the visions beheld by the prophet, in which the gates of different kinds are enumerated...Let him peruse also from the Apocalypse of John what is related of the City of God"[1].

Yet this by no means warrants the conclusion that Mithraism was not a component of the force which produced the New Testament Scriptures. Despite the fact that sacred books were not commonly used in his worship, Mithra did not lack those who recorded his mysteries. Justin Martyr[2] says, "And when those who record the mysteries of Mithras say that he was begotten of a rock and call the place where those who believe in him are initiated a cave, do I not perceive here that the utterance of Daniel that a stone without hands was cut out of a great mountain, has been imitated by them, and that they have attempted likewise to imitate the whole of Isaiah's words? For they contrived that the words of righteousness be quoted also by them. But I repeat to you the words of Isaiah referred to, in order that from them you may know that these things are so". Justin then quoted Isaiah 33:13-19 as the passage "imitated" by the Mithraists under the influence of the demons. This would show that the Mithraic cult writers were also concerned with practical righteousness.

Moreover, the Mithraists were seeking many of the same values in life as the Christians, and to keep the "commandments" of Mithra was to insure oneself of a confidence, a safe harbor, and a sure hope

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1. Cels. VI 23, 23.
2. Trypho, LXX; trans. A-NF, Vol. I.

before a merciful God[1]. Origen granted that the Magi, like Egyptians and Brahmans, used powerful names: Egyptian names were effective against certain spirits, while other names in Persian had corresponding power over other spirits[2]. If, therefore, Mithraism did not itself make use of the sacred books to which its origin is related, that did not prevent those who felt the need of them as an aid to attaining union with God from using the name of Mithra, together with materials from the Mandaic and Manichaean texts, to make their own writings more effective.

This is precisely what seems to have happened in the case of the syncretistic fourth century magical papyrus published by Dieterich as a "Mithrasliturgy"[3]. The object of the writer of this papyrus was to give instructions as to the way of obtaining peace of soul in "the good hours of this very day"[4]. His goal was nothing short of looking into the face of God and the birth through death to immortality. The means of reaching it was to take three deep breaths and be raised up on high. Directions for the journey, together with the appropriate prayers for each stage of the journey follow. The writer attributed the power that had been bestowed upon him to a gift by the archangel of the Great God Helios-Mithras in order that he alone, an Eagle, might walk across heaven and look at everything. The name of Mithras enhanced the value of his writing.

A similar aim underlies the Christian Acts of Thomas (first half of the third century)[5]. It was originally Syriac, but so popular that

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1. See Julian as cited above.
2. Cels. I 24.
3. A Dieterich, Eine Mithrasliturgie, dritte erweit. Aufl., hrsg. von O. Weinreich (anastasischer Ausdr.) Leipzig u. Berlin 1923; for a discussion of the correctness of Dieterich's position see the editor's Appendix, p. 234-240.
4. Diet., Mithraslit., ll 5-6, p. 14.
5. See M. R. James, Apocryphal New Testament and Hennecke, Neutestamentliche Apokryphen.

Greek[1], Latin, Armenian, and Ethiopic versions were made. Of the "Hymn of the Soul" which it contains[2] Cumont says, "It originated among the Magi of Osrhoene or Assyria a little before the birth of Manichaeism, and hymns analogous to it were probably sung by those who were faithful to Mithra during the celebration of the mysteries". A single example will show how, throughout the Acts, Iranian elements are combined with Scripture, both of the Old and New Testaments. In Chapters 30 to 38, in which the Iranian conception of the final conflict between Ormuzd and Ahriman appears, the Dragon is represented as quoting from Genesis, Exodus, Matthew and Revelation. The basis of confidence of the writer is the belief that what Christ once did he can and will accomplish again for those who are devoted to him. The needs of his circle and the corresponding function of sacred books in supplying them may be seen from the prayer in Chapter 156: Jesus was presented as comrade, the hope of the weak and the confidence of the poor; as a refuge and resting-place for the weary; as a voice from heaven, comforter and haven for those who travel through dark lands; as physician, crucified for many, victorious over the princes of death, raised up in great glory; and as the shepherd who would gather his sheep into his fold.

III. Sacred books in propaganda and catechization.

More important than the use of sacred books in worship was their function for the religions of the Greeks and Romans in propaganda and catechization. Such use of them was of long standing among the Greeks. Even in the days of Plato "mountebanks" and "prophets" were using the

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1. Bonnet's ed. is based on 21 MSS.
2. Chaps. 108-113.

books of Musaeus and Orpheus, which they referred to the moon and the muses, to persuade, not only private persons, but states as well, that sacrifices and games would absolve and purge both the living and the dead from their iniquities[1].

Equally scornful was Demosthenes. To his opponent Aeschines he said, "After you were grown up you attended your mother's initiations, reading her books and helping her in all the ceremonies: at night wrapping the novitiates in fawn-skin, swilling, purifying, and scouring them with clay and bran, raising them after the lustration, and bidding them say, 'Bad I have 'scaped, and better I have found', priding yourself that no one ever howled so lustily--and I believe him! for don't suppose that he who speaks so loud is not a splendid howler!"[2] Nevertheless, the very fact that the great orator chose this method of discrediting Aeschines shows that the use of books in religious ceremonies was already known as widely as scandal could travel. The cult referred to by Demosthenes was that of the Phrygian Sabazios and the Mother of the Gods.

One of the reasons given by Plutarch in answer to the question why the Pythian Priestess no longer delivered her oracles in verse was "that those mountebanks, jugglers, imposters, gypsies, and all that altar-licking tribe of vagabonds that set up their throats at the festivals and sacrifices to Cybele and Serapis, have highly undervalued poetry; some of them extempore, and others by lottery from certain little books, composing vain predictions, which they may sell to servants and silly

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1. Plato, Republic 364 E.
2. Demosthenes, On the Crown, 259-60; trans. C. R. Kennedy, 1879.

women, that easily suffer themselves to be deluded by the overawing charms of serious ambiguity couched in strange and uncouth ballatry. Whence it comes to pass that poetry, seeming to prostitute itself among cheats and deluders of the people, among mercenary gypsies and mumping charlatans, has lost its ancient credit, and is therefore thought unworthy of the Tripos[1]". Thinly veiled by the mask of contempt for the oracular poetry found useful and appreciated by "servants and silly women"--superstition was thought to be necessary for women, who could not be led to piety by philosophy--is the fact of its circulation among the "common" people to the point of discrediting the use of "genuine" poetry as an expression of prophecy.

From the ruins of Pompeii comes another piece of evidence. Outside the Porta Ercolanese there was discovered in 1909 in what had been the triclinium of a dwelling house a wall painting[2]. The central group of the painting shows the youth Dionysus leaning on the lap of a woman variously identified as Demeter, Semele, or Ariadne, the last being preferable. The same figure with slight modifications occurs on a cameo at Vienna and on two coins of Smyrna, one dating at the period of Domitian and the other with a bust of Julia Domna on the obverse. With reference to the coins from Smyrna it is to be noted that there was a cult of Dionysus Breseus or Breiseus in that city, which appears to have been in the hands of a society whose members styled themselves <u>technitai</u> and <u>mystai</u>[3]. They are probably a branch of the technitai of Dionysus,

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1. Plutarch, Wherefore the Pythian Priestess now ceases to deliver her oracles in verse 25; trans. J. Philips, Goodwin Vol. III, p.69-103.
2. See V. Macchioro, Zagreus, 1920, p. 73-75 and Miss P. B. Mudie Cooke the Journal of Roman Studies (3) 1913, p. 157-174.
3. CIG 3190; Foucart, Des Assoc. Rl. p. 114 f.; Ziebarth, Das Griech. Ver., p. 205-6.

who in Asia Minor enacted Dionysiac mystery plays[1]. The suggestion has been made[2] that perhaps the scene at Pompeii is a copy of an original representing a mystery play at Smyrna. If this is true, the scene at Pompeii may be taken as a type of these widespread mystery plays.

One of the episodes depicted in the Pompeian wall-painting is a ceremony of initiation. In it is shown the scene of catechization. The following description of it is taken from Macchioro[3]: With a penitent and thoughtful air a woman, richly adorned, approaches a group in which there is a nude boy who is reading from a roll which he holds spread out with both his hands. Behind him is seated a woman who listens and follows the reading, holding in her hand another roll. The high boots which the boy wears, being typical of Dionysus, show his character clearly as a boy priest of that God, and one of the many boy priests of antiquity. His Dionysiac character determines the content of the roll which he is reading. It evidently contains the ritual of initiation which was read to the neophyte just as, for example, took place in the case of Apuleius, who, in the first part of his initiation, had to go through a preliminary course of instruction, and just as among the Pheneatians, to whose reading from the sacred books kept in the Petroma reference has already been made. The ceremony, therefore, was that of catechization, that is, of ritual and dogmatic instruction for the ceremonies depicted in the following scenes of the painting.

The initiation of Apuleius referred to in the preceding paragraph is thus described by him: On the morning of the day on which "Lucius"

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1. Foucart, p. 115. 2. Cooke, l.c. 3. Macchioro, l.c.

was initiated into the mysteries of Isis an old man, the great priest, led him to the gate of the great temple. After the gate had been opened with due religious ceremony he made a solemn celebration, and after the morning sacrifice was ended, he brought out of the secret place of the temple certain books written in unknown characters, and partly printed with the figures of beasts and "partly with letters whose tops and tails turned round in fashion of a wheel, joined together alone like unto the tendrils of a vine, whereby they were wholly strange and impossible to read of the profane people". From these books the old priest interpreted to Lucian the things that were necessary in preparation for his order[1].

IV. Theories of education and character-building and their relation to sacred books.

In the foregoing examples of catechization the element stressed was ritual and ceremonial. On account of the nature of the source material the question of the relation of this instruction to the moral life of the initiates is involved in obscurity. It is natural to suppose that the exaltation coming from the sense of victory over death, together with the constant purifications and self-imposed regulations governing the common life of the private religious associations of the Graeco-Roman world was not without effect on the moral conduct of the devotees. Indeed, Justin's charge that the Mithraists had contrived to quote the words of righteousness from Isaiah would seem in direct evidence in favor of this conclusion. Yet on the other hand it must be recognized that even apart from the degrading elements

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1. Metamorphoses XI 22; trans. Gasleo in Loeb.

involved in some of the mystery cults, instruction for moral living does not seem to have been a direct and immediate aim of catechization. Mystic union with the God was the primary thing. This, once achieved, was potentially a moral factor, and, to the majority of the common people, a consequent sanction for the great mass of ethical dogma, whatever they may have been taught of it, that had accumulated through the centuries more or less independent of religious sanction. Just as in the case of their physical and metaphysical speculations, so also with ethical, it was inconceivable that such things, found out even by the minds of men within the historical period, should have escaped the notice of founders of the cults who were Gods and sons of Gods. Hence not only philosophy, but ethics also, of the most exalted type was found in the ancestral traditions, much as Philo and his school had found both in the Pentateuch.

Nor had sacred books been without significance in the ethical education of the growing number of intellectuals who from the days of Justin onward, were being attracted to Christianity--men to whom the popular cults did not appeal. From the beginning the aim of Greek education had been the development of courageous and virtuous character. Preeminent as materials for such education stood the works of the inspired poets of the past. As soon as the pupil had learned his alphabet and had begun to understand what he read, his teacher gave him verses from the better poets to read and made him learn by heart poetry full of salutary counsel, containing moral tales, eulogies of generous men, who, once upon a time, had performed great and noble

actions. Since it was proposed especially to develop the moral sense, the poets were called upon not only to cultivate the taste of the student, but to render him virtuous[1].

In Roman education also the poet played a vital part. Horace, for example, says that Orbilius his teacher used to dictate to him the poems of Livius Andronicus, and that not even the floggings he received had set him against them absolutely, although he was astonished that they should have been considered faultless and beautiful and almost perfect. This shows the tremendous prestige enjoyed even by poetry which, judged by later standards appeared crude, simply because it happened to have the advantage of being first in point of time, and therefore often the only material with which the teacher was familiar[2].

According to Horace[3] the service of the poet was to turn even in their early days the ears of the young away from evil words; to fashion the heart by kindly precepts; to correct roughness, malice, and anger; to tell of virtuous deeds and furnish the dawn of life with illustrious examples; to comfort the sad and the helpless. "Whence," he asks, "could the pious boys and virgins learn their hymns of prayer, had not the Muse granted us a bard?" In the words of the poets the chorus prayed for aid and felt the presence of heaven; in the poetic form of persuasive prayer it implored rain, averted disease, drove away dreaded dangers, attained peace and good crops, and appeased the Gods above and the Gods below.

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1. Plato, Protag. 325C; Strabo, Geog. I 2, 3.
2. Epist. II 1 (70-75).
3. Epist. II 1.

"In the eyes of the Greeks", says Girard[1], "the poet is the counsellor and the guide of mankind; as trustee of divine wisdom, he is the educator par excellence. He is also asked to furnish, not only rules of conduct, but items of useful information: the poems of Orpheus, Musaeus, Hesiod, and Homer have revealed to humanity a thousand ways of ameliorating its lot. In possession of universal science, the poet renders as many services to the body as to the soul; he is the inventor or the popularizer of every art, while at the same time he gives instruction in living well; he also makes Deity known to men and teaches them how it intervenes in human affairs and the manner in which one may prevail on it. This is why the philosophers have constant recourse to his experience. Even the orators quote him on the platform and draw from him weapons against their adversaries. Demosthenes intersperses his great political speeches with elegies of Solon and tirades of Sophocles; Aeschines and Lycurgus throw into their eloquence fragments of Homer, Hesiod, Tyrtaeus, and Euripides. Strangest of all is the fact that these orators in general do not themselves recite these pieces of poetry as some witty lawyer among us, who might remember something in connection with his reading from them: more often it is the clerk who reads them; in argument they have the same importance as laws, decrees, and testimonies. In fact, they are properly proofs; they are texts which contain eternal truths upon which the orator comments as upon passages from a kind of Bible. It is this which justifies the frequency of quotations and the value attributed to them at the same time by those who speak and those who listen".

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1. Paul Girard, L'Éducation Athenién̈ne au Ve et au IVe Siècle avant J.-C., Paris 1891, 2 ed., p. 139-140.

The function of the ancient poets, particularly Homer and Hesiod, in character building as a factor in the development of sacred books may now be traced. Among the tasks set for pupils was the explanation of such verses from Homer as, "It ill becomes kings to sleep through the night", and the working out of sketches of character or of situations like "Achilles' thoughts on the death of Patroclus". Very significant for the development of veneration for the poetical textbooks in use in the schools was the assignment for explanation of the following: "Plato said that the muses dwelt in the souls of ingenious men"[1].

Velleius Paterculus sets forth the Roman estimate of Homer[2]: "It was at this time that the illustrious genius of Homer shone forth; a genius great beyond example; for by the grandeur of his subjects, and the splendor of his verse, he has gained an exclusive right to the name of poet. What is most remarkable with respect to him is that neither was there anyone before him whom he could imitate, nor has anyone since been found who could imitate him. Nor can we point to any other author except Homer and Antilochus, who arrived at the highest excellence in the kind of writing of which he was the inventor".

Equally enthusiastic was Quintillian. In his opinion Homer had given a model and an origin for every species of eloquence. He was especially impressed by the fact that the great poet rendered his readers well-affected towards himself by an invocation of the Goddesses who were supposed to preside over poets. "Does he not, indeed, "he asks, "in words, thoughts, figures, and the arrangement of his whole work, exceed

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1. J. L. Ussing, Erziehung und Jugendunterricht bei den Griechen und Römern, Berlin 1895, neue Bearb., p. 126.
2. Compendium of Roman History I 5; trans. by J. S. Watson, London 1912 (Bohn).

the ordinary bounds of human genius? So much, indeed, that it requires a great man even to follow his excellences, not with rivalry (for rivalry is impossible) but with a just conception of them[1]". As for Hesiod, although he did not rise above the general level, his sententious manner was useful in delivering precepts[2].

On down through the first Christian centuries the influence of Homer continued. To Pliny the Elder he was the light from which other stars borrowed, "brilliant, distinguished, gazing at all things, listening to all things[3]", and the first parent of instruction and antiquity[4]. As a remarkable occurrence foreshadowing future greatness, Julius Capitolinus relates of Maximinus II (235-238 A.D.) that when he was given into the charge of his teacher one of his relatives gave him all the books of Homer written in letters of gold on purple parchment[5]. Aelius Spartianus, who lived in the time of Diocletian and Constantine, found evidence of the vainglory of Hadrian in that he "preferred Cato to Cicero, Ennius to Vergil, Coelius to Sallust and with the same vainglory passed judgment on Homer and Plato"[6]. In the last effort of expiring paganism the Emperor Julian, who was attempting to incite the pagan priests to match their atheist (Christian) rivals, wrote to the High Priest of Galatia: "Teach the friends of Hellenism to bear their part of the expenses;

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1. Quint. X 50; trans. J. S. Watson, London 1856 (Bohn).
2. Quint. X 1, 46-51.
3. N. H. II 13; ed. Sillig 1851.
4. N. H. 25, 2, 5 sec. 11.
5. Script. Hist. Aug. (Peter 1884). XVIIII 30, 4.
6. Ib. I, Aelii Spartiani Hadrianus 16.

exhort the Greek villages to offer to the Gods the first fruits of their produce. Accustom the Greeks to those acts of benevolence by teaching them that these practices have been ours for a long time". In proof of this he quoted three lines of Homer's Odyssey: "Stranger, it is not right for me to slight a stranger, not even one in poorer plight than you; for in the charge of Zeus all strangers and beggars stand, and our small gift is welcome"[1].

Serious difficulties, however, were encountered in the use of Homer and the other poets as materials for building character and as ethical sanctions. They were already felt in the days of Plato. For, in the words of Isocrates, "the poets blasphemously represented the sons of the immortals as having done and suffered worse deeds than the most impious of men...and Orpheus, who devoted himself especially to such stories was torn in pieces[2]". Plato, while approving of the use of the poets in education, tried to put the idealized Socrates in the position of Achilles, and drew up canons which they must follow: God being good, cannot be the cause or originator of any harm or evil to mankind[3]; God is not a wizard, appearing now in one form, now in another; the future state must not be described as in any way terrible[4].

Plutarch, also concerned with this problem, wrote a treatise on How a young man ought to hear poems[5]. While the student was to prepare himself for philosophy by means of poems[6], it had to be recognized that poets mingled truth with fiction. Consequently a proper discrimination

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1. Odyssey XIV 56-59, trans. G. H. Palmer, N.Y. 1891, p. 215; J. Bidez (trans.) L'Empereur Julian, Tome I-2e Partie, p. 146.
2. Isoc, Bous. 228D; quoted by K. J. Freeman, Schools of Hellas, Macmillan 1907, p. 230.
3. Rep. 380.
4. Freeman, p. 232.
5. Plut. trans. S. Ford, Goodwin, Vol. II, p. 42-94.
6. Op. cit. 1.

was necessary. "Almost every one knows nowadays", he says, "that the portentous fancies and contrivances of stories concerning the state of the dead are accommodated to popular apprehensions,—that the specters and phantasms of burning rivers and horrid regions and terrible tortures expressed by frightful names are all mixed with fable and fiction, as poison with food; and that neither Homer nor Pindar nor Sophocles ever believed themselves when they wrote at this rate..."[1].

In matters of morals we are to observe whether the poet himself disapproves the act he is describing. "But Homer of all the poets does it best", he says, quoting Odyssey VIII 329:

"See the swift God o'ertaken by the lame!
Thus ill acts prosper not, but end in shame".

Contradictions among poets neutralize their power to do mischief; in such cases the better saying is to be given the preference[2].

Grammar and philology also came to Plutarch's assistance[3]: "If any noun or verb near at hand may assist to the correction of any such saying, and preserve us from putting a bad construction upon it, we should take hold of it to assist a more favorable interpretation, as some do in reference to those verses in Homer, —

'Sorrows and tears most commonly are seen,
To be God's rewards to wretched men'[4]:

'The Gods, who have no cause themselves to grieve
For wretched man a web of sorrow weave'[5].

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1. Op. cit. 2.
2. Op. cit. 4
3. Op. cit. 5-6.
4. Odyss. IV 197.
5. Illiad XXIV 526.

For, they say, he says not of men simply, or of all men, that the Gods weave for them the fatal web of a sorrowful life; but he affirms it only of foolish and imprudent men, whom, because their vices make them such, he therefore calls wretched and miserable".

Absurd things spoken of Jupiter might be referred to fortune or fate, and all in all the ancient poets were to be forced to conform to the philosophical concept of the life agreeable to nature. The young man was to be taught to criticize and discriminate--which in the more obvious trivialities was precisely the thing young men were keen to do[1]. Yet even from those passages that were most suspected of being wicked or absurd boys were to be instructed to draw something useful and profitable. Good passages in poems were to be improved by testimonies taken from the philosophers[2].

Treated in this fashion the field which Homer offered for exegesis was immense. He was made into a moralist ceaselessly occupied in leading men in the right path, and his wisdom, always new, was suited for all time. Homer, transformed thus by exegesis and allegory, confronted Moses and the Prophets of the Old Testament, and the Christians in like manner were compelled to allegorize. History they did indeed see in it, for was not Moses older than the great figures among the Greeks? But they were more interested in it as an introduction to the life of Jesus, and as a book of instruction in the righteousness demanded of his followers. Such use of it was, however, attended by certain disadvantages. In the first place it was written in a strange and "barbarous" language and in a style

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1. Plut. op. cit. 8-9.
2. Op. cit. 12.

that could not compare with the writings of the Greeks--an objection which had to be countered by claiming it for the "common people"--and in the second place many of its ethical and theological conceptions could only be harmonized with the contemporary conscience and faith by means of allegory. These disadvantages were factors in favor of the development and acceptance of the New Testament Scriptures.

On the other hand, for the growing numbers of educated people who had been brought up on Homer it came quite natural to apply the same methods of exegesis and to attach the same attitudes, often with a far more passionate devotion resulting from the authority of their new religious experience and the transfer of their loyalties to Christ, to the Scriptures of the Old and the New Testaments. Such men, when it suited their purpose, still employed Homer in argument, and between the lines of their writings there can frequently be seen, in spite of their vehement repudiation of him, traces of their former attachment.

The writer of the pseudo-Justinian Hortatory Address to the Greeks[1] while confronting those who held to the Homeric and Hesiodic teaching with the dilemma of either accepting a ridiculous theogony of battling Gods or believing that there were no Gods at all, and while recognizing that Homer, using the license of poetry, mentions several Gods in mythical style, nevertheless quotes him as authority for the belief in the existence of the one and only God: "But shortly after he (Homer) also clearly and explicitly presents his own opinion regarding

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1. Ca. 250 A.D.: Stählin; Hortatory Address to the Greeks II and XVII; trans. A-Nf, Vol. I.

one God only, somewhere[1] saying to Achilles by the mouth of Phoenix, 'Not though God himself were to promise that he would peal off my old age, and give me the vigor of my youth', where he indicates by the pronoun the real and true God. And somewhere[2] he makes Ulysses address the host of the Greeks thus: 'The rule of many is not a good thing; let there be one ruler'". Again, he quotes Homer as referring all power and might to the one highest God[3], and compares his knowledge of man's origin with the Genesis narratives[4]: "And that man was formed from the earth, Homer, too, having discovered from the ancient and divine history which says, 'Dust thou art and unto dust shalt thou return'[5], calls the lifeless body of Hector dumb clay. For in condemnation of Achilles dragging the corpse of Hector after death he says somewhere[6], 'On the dumb clay he cast indignity, blinded with rage'. And again, somewhere else[7] he introduces Menelaus thus addressing those who were not accepting Hector's challenge to single combat with becoming alacrity, 'To earth and water may you all return', resolving them in his violent rage into their original and pristine formation from earth. These things Homer and Plato had learned in Egypt".

Theophilus of Antioch had already pointed out the fact that there were contradictions between the poets, particularly between Homer and Hesiod and the philosophers, in their opinions concerning God. Yet he also called upon the poets for testimony, "as it were, oracularly uttered",

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1. Iliad IX 445.
2. Illiad II 204.
3. Hort. Ad. to the Greeks XXIV.
4. Ib. XXX.
5. Gen. 3:19.
6. Iliad XXII.
7. Iliad VII 99.

that evil doers must necessarily be punished in proportion to their deeds: the poets corroborated the testimony of the prophets[1]; nor did it matter whether the poets were before or after the prophets[2].

The experienced searcher after truth, according to Clement of Alexandria[3], brings everything to bear upon a right life, procuring examples from the Greeks and barbarians: like the Lydian touchstone he has the power of distinguishing the spurious from the genuine gold. Following his own advice, he quotes from Plato, Hesiod, Homer, Callimachus, and the elegies of Solon as witnesses to the sacredness of the Seventh day. From Homer he took the following lines: "And on the seven then came the sacred day", "The seventh was sacred", "It was the seventh day and all things were accomplished", "And on the seventh morn we leave the stream of Acheron"[4].

Another aspect of the influence of the writings of the poets considered as authoritative on Christianity is to be noted from Irenaeus, namely, their use by the promoters of "heresy". "Then again", he says, "collecting a set of expressions and names scattered here and there (in Scripture), they twist them, as we have already said, from a natural to a non-natural sense. In so doing they act like those who bring forward any kind of hypothesis they fancy, and then endeavor to support them out of the poems of Homer, so that the ignorant imagine that Homer actually composed the verses bearing on that hypothesis, which has, in fact, been but newly constructed; and many others are led so far by the

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1. To Autolycus II 37.
2. Op. cit. II 38.
3. Strom I 9.
4. Strom V 14.

regularly formed sequence of the verses as to doubt whether Homer may not have composed them[1].

A similar process of twisting the Scriptures to one's own ruin had been encountered by the writer of Second Peter[2]; and to prevent the adherents of Christianity from turning away from the faith, the writer of the First Letter to Timothy urged devotion to the public reading of Scripture, and to preaching and teaching[3]. At an early date, also, there were those who made their way into people's houses making "captives" of women by catechization[4] in similar fashion as the "mountebanks" and "prophets" so scornfully referred to by Plato and Demosthenes. The vogue of this method of propaganda in the Christian period is further attested by Hermas, who commanded Grapte to take a copy of his book and exhort the widows and orphans[5], and by Origen[6], who says that the adherents of the Ophites, who professed a kind of magic and sorcery, circulated in people's houses a "diagram" consisting of circles on which were inscribed, "Father and Son", "Love", "Life", "The foresight of wisdom", "The nature of wisdom", "Knowledge", "Understanding". That even in orthodox Christian circles such a custom was sometimes attended with scandal is shown by the writer of the pseudo-Clementine letter "On Virginity"[7]: "Some go about among the homes of virgins, brothers, or sisters, under the pretext of visiting them or of reading the Scriptures or of exorcising them or teaching"[8].

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1. He gives an example made up of Od. X 76, Il. XIX 123, Il. VIII 368, Od. VI 130, Il. XXIV 327, Od. XI 38, Il. XXIV 328, Od. XI 626 and Il. II 409 to describe Hercules sent by Eurystheus to the dog in the infernal regions: Against Heresies I ix. 4: trans.A-NF.
2. II Peter 3:16-17.
3. I Timothy 4:13.
4. II Timothy 3:6-7.
5. Vis. II 4,3.
6. Cels. VI 24.
7. First half of third century A.D.
8. Harnack, Bible reading in the early church, trans. J. R. Wilkinson, N. Y. 1912, p. 64.

Yet in spite of this drawback, these religious conventicles in which there was reading from Scripture continued to exist. To control them it was only necessary for the church to place more stress upon public reading and teaching. The test of a teacher was whether he did as he taught: "It is better", says Ignatius[1], "to be silent and be real than to talk and be unreal. Teaching is good if the teacher does what he says. There is one teacher who spoke and it came to pass, and what he has done even in silence is worthy of the Father"[2]. If the dangers arising from the possibility of being led astray by false teachers were thus great, it was also true that the reading of a good teacher was an effective means of salvation. The writer of the Second Epistle of Clement thus addressed his audience: "Therefore, brothers and sisters, following the God of truth, I am reading you an exhortation to pay attention to that which is written that you may both save yourselves and him who is the reader among you. For as a reward I beg of you to repent with all your heart."[3]

Scripture was also used in enforcing attendance at Christian meetings: "Do not by retiring apart", said the writer of the Epistle of Barnabas, "live alone as if you were already made righteous, but come together and seek the common good. For the Scripture says, 'Woe unto them who are prudent for themselves, and understanding in their own sight[4]". In recognition of the necessity of instructing all members of the Christian groups, the writer of First Clement made this plea:

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1. Ign. Eph. XV 1.
2. Cf. Didache XI 7.
3. II Clem. XIX 1.
4. Is. 5:21. Barn IV 10-11.

"Let us instruct the young in the fear of God, let us lead our wives to that which is good[1]. Let our children share in the instruction which is in Christ, let them learn the strength of humility before God, the power of pure love before God, how beautiful and great is his fear, and how it gives salvation to all who live holily in it with a pure mind"[2].

V. The influence of Emperor worship on the development of sacred books.

The insistence of ancient educators upon the development of character was motivated primarily by consideration for the safety of the state. Because this was felt to depend upon the proper relationship with the Gods, governments were inclined to surveillance over all such matters as the organization of private religious associations, their worship, and their methods of propaganda and education. Moreover, the private religious associations might, and often did, serve as masks for political intrigue.

Plato's theory was that the founder of a state might order the laws on education, but that "the greatest and noblest and chiefest of all" must be left to Apollo: "the institution of temples and sacrifices, and in general the service of the Gods, demigods and heroes; also the ordering of the repositories of the dead, and the rites which have to be observed to propitiate the inhabitants of the world below. For these are matters of which we are ignorant, and as the founders of a city we should be unwise in trusting them to any interpreter but our ancestral Deity."[3]

Since, however, Apollo could order his institutions only through the human beings who were devoted to him, Plato's theory, after all,

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1. I Clem. XXI 6.
2. I Clem. XXVII 4.
3. From the Republic, quoted by Monroe, Source Book of the History of Education, p. 172.

amounted to nothing more than official control. He recommended the Egyptian method of regulating religious songs and dances: "This is to be arranged at first by certain persons, and, when arranged, the whole assembly of the citizens are to offer sacrifices and libations to the fates and to all the other Gods and heroes: and if anyone offers any other hymns or dances to anyone of the Gods, the priests and priestesses, with the consent of the guardians of the law, shall religiously and lawfully exclude him, and he who is excluded, if he do not submit, shall be liable all his life long to have a suit of impiety brought against him by any one who likes[1]". Uniformity was the principle when the state was concerned.

Odes thus officially consecrated to Gods, heroes, and states were, like Homer's poetry, considered authoritative. Cities quoted sacred books against each other. At the beginning of the sixth century B.C., for example, an interpolated line in the Iliad was made the main support of the Athenian claim to the island of Salamis, and by reference to Homer, Gelon, tyrant of Syracuse,[2] was refused command of the Hellenic forces against Persia[3]. On public occasions selections from the poets were sung or recited by children. Girard[4] cites the fact that at the festival of Zeus Panemerios children of noble race were designated to sing hymns in honor of the God[5], and when parents

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1. Rep. VI 793-823; Monroe p. 236.
2. Fl. B.C. 491-478.
3. Herod. VII 159-161; quoted by Freeman, Schools of Hellas, p. 228.
4. Girard, p. 254-5.
5. CIG 2715.

presented the newly born child as a member of the phratry, children recited poetry taken from the ancients and moderns, for which they received pay. A papyrus account of public games of the second century A.D.[1] mentions among other payments 448 drachmas to a reciter of Homer's poems. The Cretans, who especially honored the arts of music and song taught odes to the children[2].

In the keen rivalry between ancient cities the paeans of the poets were used as a means of patriotic glorification. The Cretans, especially, were fond of this sort of thing. They were particularly pleased when these poetical honors came from foreigners. An inscription from Teos, dating about the middle of the second century B.C., records an expression of honor bestowed upon the ambassador of that city to Crete. He had won the good will of the Cretans by reciting with musical accompaniment selections from the ancient poets. The inscription mentions a man named Menecles, who had delivered a discourse on the history of a Cretan city, and had given an entertainment of music with recitation of poetry. He had also offered to the magistrates a historical cycle made up of extracts taken from their old poets and historians.[3]

A similar honor had been bestowed upon Dioscourides a native of Tarsus. Following Homer, he had composed a eulogy on the city of Cnossus. This he sent to that city with a pupil of his named Myrinus, himself an epic and a lyric poet, who was to recite it. Myrinus acquitted himself so well and so impressed the people of Cnossus with his master's attachment for their city that they conferred upon him the citizenship[4].

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1. Oxyr. Papyr. III, 519.
2. Strabo X 4, 20.
3. Le Bas et Waddington, Voyage en Grèce et en Asie Mineure, Explication des Inscr. III, p. 39-40; No. 81 (CIG 3053) et 82 (CIG 3057).
4. Th. Homolle in BCH IV (1880) p. 352-63.

The decree was deposited in the temple of Apollo at Delos. With reference to the inter-relations between these Greek cities in the matter of such entertainments it is to be noted that Teos, which was also celebrated for its taste for these representations, was the seat of a powerful corporation of Dionysiac artists, who furnished actors for the theaters in Asia and the Archipelago.

More material benefits also demanded a fitting literary memorial. A second century papyrus entitled, "The act of grace of Zeus-Helios, great Sarapis, regarding Syrion the pilot", runs as follows: "...he said, 'For your sake I will bestow water upon the people of Pharos'. And having saluted him he sailed forth and gave water to the people of Pharos, receiving from them its value, one hundred drachmae of silver. This act of grace[1] is registered in the libraries of Mercuriom. Let all present say, 'There is one Zeus Sarapis'". The water had miraculous properties, and the writer of the papyrus belonged to those who were cured of diseases at the Serapeum of Canopus. Such tales, which were often the foundation of what Reitzenstein[2] calls the Aretalogy, were quite popular, and the attitudes centering about them became constituent elements in the development of sacred books. In this particular case the God Zeus-Sarapis had acted through a pilot.

Another papyrus of the third century A.D.[3] celebrates the youth Theon, who apparently had made a benefaction to the gymnasium: "Hermes, do thou thyself hasten to sing for me of thy young interpreter, and help the bard, striking with thy hand the seven-stringed many-toned

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1. ἀρετή.
2. Oxyr. Papyr. No. 1382, G and H, Vol. XI, p. 234-236; R. Reitzenstein, Hellenistiche Wundererzählungen, Leipzig 1906.
3. Oxyr. Papyr. No. 1015, G and H. Vol. VII, p. 111.

lyre...therefore do the latter day bards celebrate thy services of the Muses...and cities hymn thee as warden of the gymnasia".

Political and military favors also entitled the benefactors to outbursts of praise. When the conqueror happened to have wrought some real change for the better by overthrowing some despotic regime, the expressions in his honor were genuine; when only his own interests and ambitions were served by the change, flattery became a matter of policy. The frequent changes of government among the Greek states had furnished more than one occasion for such flattery. To all this the Romans fell heir, and in the course of time they learned to turn it to political account, so that the language of these encomiums became the language of Emperor worship, language which the Christians had to match by the claims they put forth for Jesus as Lord of all. Consequently, in addition to writings made sacred by virtue of their dedication to the cities and kings of the Greek world, the function of literature made sacred by consecration to the Roman Emperors, together with the attitudes connected with and developed by Emperor worship, must be considered as a genetic factor in the development of the sacred canon of the Christians.

Cassius Dio, whose description of the honors rendered to Julius Caesar reflects Emperor worship as it appeared to a citizen of the second century A.D., says that to him, although he was dead, was assigned the honor of a thanksgiving when news of a victory came, as well as to the victor himself, and that his name was included in the hymns equally with those of the Gods[1].

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1. Dio Cassius XLVII, 1-5; LI, 20, 6.

Even representation of the sacred dramas of other religions were made contributory to the honor and glory of the Emperor. Thus just before his death Caligula, who is said to have instituted a temple and priests with choicest victims in honor of his own divinity[1], and who exhibited Grecian games at Syracuse and Attic plays in Lyons, Gaul, and a contest in Greek and Roman eloquence[2], planned a spectacle in which the fables of the infernal regions were to be represented by Egyptians and Ethiopians[3]. Claudius likewise, in memory of his brother, gave a Greek comedy to be exhibited in Naples,and awarded a crown for it "according to the sentence of the judges in that solemnity"[4].

The Emperor's own literary productions, also, were calculated to augment his prestige. At an early age Claudius had attempted history writing, calling a numerous audience to hear it read. After he became Emperor, he continued to write, one of his compilations being a history of his own life in eight books. In Greek he wrote twenty books on Tuscan affairs, and eight on Carthaginian. The consequence was that an additional museum had to be founded at Alexandria and named for him. Upon certain days in each year his Tuscan history was to be read over in one of these museums, and his Carthaginian in the other. Each history was to be read through by persons who took it in turn.[5] Certainly, something more than a mere desire for literary fame must have dictated this extraordinary measure: the titles of the Emperor's histories suggest that the reading of them had to do with the development of loyalty to the Empire.

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1. Suet. Calig. XXII.
2. Calig. XX.
3. Calig. LVII.
4. Claudius XI.
5. Claud. XLI-XLII.

Nero's success was more spontaneous[1]. "He frequently declaimed in public, and recited verses of his own composing, not only at home, but in the theater; so much to the joy of all the people that public prayers were appointed to be put up to the Gods on that account; and the verses which had been publicly read, were, after being written in gold letters, consecrated to Jupiter Capitolinus". To inquire how much of abject flattery lay at the bottom of this is beside the point under discussion; for, regardless of sincerity, the attitudes involved might be turned against the Christians.

Nor is one's estimate of the effect of this on Christianity dependent upon the position taken with respect to the critical question how far the early Emperors themselves took the initiative to secure for themselves divine honors, because sometimes their expressed wishes were overborne by the enthusiasm of their Eastern subjects. The other side of the picture, representing the point of view, or at least the methods, of the provincial officials is illustrated by the letter of Claudius of A.D. 41 to the Alexandrians[2] giving them permission to keep his birthday as a Dies Augusta in the manner they themselves had proposed. This letter the Prefect published. His proclamation runs: "Proclamation by L. Aemilius Rectus: Since the whole populace was unable, owing to its numbers, to be present at the reading of the most sacred and most gracious letter to the city, I have deemed it necessary to display it publicly, in order that reading it individually you may admire the majesty of our God Caesar and show your gratitude for his goodwill towards the city". Here the Emperor's own representative calls on the villagers

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1. Nero X; trans. of Suet. Thomson-Forster, London 1906.
2. H. I. Bell, Jews and Christians in Egypt, 1924.

of Philadelphia in the Arsinoite Nome to read his most sacred[1] letter and to admire the majesty of their God Caesar. Such was the effect of the steady pressure from the provinces upon the Emperors to sanction extensions of their cult.

Another example is the inscription commemorating Nero's Oration on the Freedom of the Greeks[2]. The first part proclaims the command to assemble at Corinth; it begins, "Autokrator Caesar says". After the proclamation follows Nero's address, and the inscription closes with a commemoration "forever" of this "new Sun" which has shone upon the Greeks--Nero, the Lord of all the earth, who has restored to them their original freedom.

The poetical effusion of Statius called forth by the unveiling of an equestrian statue of Domitian[3] makes Curtius, who, according to the legend, had closed the abyss of the forum by leaping into it, thus address the Prince, "All hail, scion and sire of mighty Gods; from afar I have heard the fame of thy Godhead...Once alone did counsel and contrivance of mine save Rome. Thou art Jove's champion, thou art the conqueror of Rhine; thou hast checked cursed sedition and in stubborn warfare subdued a mountain people slow to make peace". Even the Sibyl is made by Statius to bear testimony: "Did I not say, 'River and Plains, be patient, for by heaven's grace there will surely come one that with a road and lofty bridges will make easy to the traveler rank woodland and quaking sand'? Behold the God! He it is whom Jupiter commanded to rule as his vice-gerent over the happy world...He is a

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1. ἱερότατος.
2. Dittenberger, Sylloge Inscr. Graec., 3rd ed., Vol. II, p. 505, No.814.
3. Statius, Silvae I, i; trans. D.A. Slater, Oxford 1908.

friend to peace: he is terrible in battle; yes and he is kinder and mightier than nature. Were he lord of the starry sky, India would be watered with beautiful showers, there would be bubbling springs in Libya, and summer warmth on Haemus[1].

Quintilian likewise contributed his meed of flattery to Domitian. He was impressed with the literary talents of the Emperor, which, however, had been overshadowed by the dazzling brightness of his other great qualities and achievements. He thus addressed him: "Yet you will bear with us, Caesar, if, while we are celebrating the sacred rites of literature, we do not pass over your genius in silence, but testify at least by citing a verse from Virgil, that 'The ivy spreads amidst thy conquering bays'"[2].

Hadrian was said to have been so eager for fame that he wrote an autobiography and ordered his freedmen to publish it[3]. In later days the Empire as personified in its head was not lacking in occasions such as the Ploiaphesia to glorify it. This is thus described by Apuleius: "One of the company which was a scribe or interpreter of letters, in the form of a preacher stood up in a chair before the place of the holy college of the Pastophores (for they are so named) and calling together their whole assembly, from his high pulpit began to read out of a book, praying for the good fortune of the Great Prince, the Senate, to the noble order of chivalry, and generally to all the Roman people, and to all the sailors and ships such as be under the puissance and jurisdiction of Rome, and he pronounced to them in the Grecian tongue

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1. Silvae IV, iii.
2. Quint. X 1, 91; trans. Watson.
3. Script. Hist. Aug. Ael. Spart. Hadr. 16.

and manner this world following, 'Ploiaphesia', which signified that it was now lawful for the ships to depart, whereat all the people gave a great shout"[1].

The foregoing examples will have made evident the mixed motives which called forth the literature in praise of the Emperors and their writings, and led to the use of sacred books in connection with their worship. These motives ranged all the way from servility and self-interest to genuine feelings of gratitude for the blessings of the Empire as personified in the Emperor. The words of the Hermetist[2] writing in praise of kings will serve to set forth these genuine feelings of gratitude in the language of the third century. The kings praised are Diocletian and his colleagues--Maximian and the two Caesars, Galerius and Constantius[3]. "For we must make requital to our kings", says the Hermetist, "for that they have spread abroad among us the prosperity which comes of this great peace. The virtue of a king is shown in making peace...his name is in itself a token of peace. Moreover, even the statues of the king serve as havens to men tossed by the fiercest storms; and it has come to pass ere now that the sight of a mere image of a king has given protection from all fears". Speeches of this kind, sometimes actually delivered, sometimes simply written orations, were addressed to the "kings", probably at such places as Antioch and Nicomedia (Diocletian's residence).

With presuppositions like this it is easily seen why it should have been considered sacrilege to deviate from the established forms of ritual

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1. Apuleius, Metamorph. XI 17; trans. Gaslee in Loeb.
2. Libellus XVIII, Scott, Vol. I, p. 274-285; Vol. II, p. 461-482.
3. 293-305 A.D.

in the Emperor cult. To be sure, one might at the same time worship other Deities besides, but the Imperial cultus itself was often as rigid as the etiquette governing the use of a modern flag. A third century A.D. papyrus[1] embodies the protest of a speaker, probably in Alexandria, against some innovation in the worship of Julius. It seems that some proposal had been made to perform the rites of the cult of Caesar as instituted by a certain Nicean, and that the speaker while willing to allow the Nicean and his people to worship Caesar as they pleased--just as the Athenians also were free to conduct the Eleusinian mysteries as they liked--felt that just as much of a sacrilege would be involved to worship Caesar with foreign rites in Alexandria(?) as against Demeter herself.

Such being the temper of the devotees of the Imperial cult in the provinces, the question of the extent to which the individual Emperors countenanced, encouraged, or demanded divine honors to themselves becomes relatively academic for the consideration of the relation of the Christians to the worship of the Emperors. While the legal restrictions laid upon the collegia and the associations were not, and could not be, rigidly enforced, so that in practice there was room for Christianity to develop, there was still ample opportunity for collisions with the government to occur[2]. As private thiasotai of Jesus they constituted an illegal factio. Like the Jews, they could pray for, but not to the Emperor: to respect and obey him was a duty,

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1. Oxyr. Papyr. No. 1612, G and H, Vol. XII, p. 148 f.
2. E. G. Hardy, Christianity and the Roman Government, N. Y. 1925 (reprint), p. 139.

but to worship him was a sacrilege. To them the genius of the Emperor was a demon, and not to be sworn by. Consequently, in spite of their practice of rendering to Caesar the things that were Caesar's, from the point of view of a state whose safety and continuance were thought to depend upon the proper participation of all its members in the official religion, they were looked upon as a deadly menace which had to be eliminated.

A major force which entered into the final victory of the Christians, not only over the numerous contemporary religious cults, but over Emperor worship as well, was their strong sense of brotherhood between the local churches scattered throughout the Empire. This, in turn, would have been impossible apart from the attribution to Jesus of all, and much more than all, of the powers and prerogatives of every competing Deity--especially the Roman Emperor. Just as the Jews had outdone the resounding title of the Persian kings--King of Kings--by referring to Jahweh as the King of the King of Kings, so the Christians could match the decree of a Nero which began, "Autokrator Caesar says", with the sayings of Jesus, Pantokrator, whose messages to the Seven churches in Asia were more binding far than any imperial rescript posted by some prefect in the temples or in the market-places. The demons, according to Justin,[1] had imitated much that was in Christianity, but in not one instance had they imitated a being who was crucified. All unwittingly the enemies of the cross were paying tribute to it by carrying it on the banners on state occasions, and all unwittingly, too, the images of the Emperors were consecrated by the form of a cross. But they were mere "Gods by

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1. First Apol. LV.

inscription", whereas the Prophets had long ago foretold the cross of Jesus as the symbol of his greatest power and rule.

The inference as to the effect of all this upon the development of sacred books in Christianity is obvious. The decrees, the odes, the paeans of praise, the commemorative inscriptions, and the writings of the Emperors themselves, all of which might be seen or heard in "heathen" temples, had to be confronted with psalms and spiritual songs, and with gospel, epistle and apocalypse. Whereas, even the great Alexander, whose name had become a synonym for conqueror, had been dependent on the Iliad of the Casket (Aristotle's recension which he carried with him) as a military viaticum, and whereas the great city of Alexandria was alleged to have been founded by him on the authority of two lines from Homer[1], the Christians could point to One who had conquered all the powers of the sky, earth and underworld, and who alone had been found worthy to break the seals of the roll of Destiny--One who now sat on the throne of the city not made with hands, eternal in the heavens. While the kings of earth were commonly regarded as the bearers or recipients of revelations[2], Jesus had revealed things to his followers which many kings and prophets had wished to see, but had not seen[3].

Thus in the days of intermittent, but always potential persecution of unrecognized religious brotherhoods, and in an age which looked to heaven for sudden oracles at any time[4], the Christian books with their story of the Cross and of the martyrs who had held true through fire

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1. Od. IV 354; Plut. Lives, Alex. VII and XXVI.
2. Franz Boll, Aus der Offenbarung Johannes, Teubner 1914, p.136-142, gives the following among others: Alexander, Cyrus, Cleopatra, Nero, Philip, Ammon of Egypt, and Hermes as King.
3. Lk. 10:23-24.
4. Apul. Metamorph. II 1.

and sword functioned to show the ultimate futility of any attack upon the Lord Jesus and his followers. They served as counter-propaganda against the literature at the disposal of the Imperial cult. A sample of such defensive literature produced by the adherents of an oppressed religion is to be found in a third century A.D. papyrus[1] account of two rival embassies to Trajan, one from the Alexandrians, the other from the Alexandrian Jews. Each party had taken "their own Gods" and had gone to Rome for an audience with the Emperor, who, however, had already been won over to the Jewish side by the Empress Plotina. When Hermaiscus, the spokesman for the Alexandrians, said, "So the name of the Jews is irksome to you? You ought then to turn round and help your own people, and not to defend the godless Jews", sweat suddenly broke out on the bust of Sarapis which the envoys carried. At this Trajan marvelled, "and presently there were tumults in Rome and many shouts were raised, and all fled to the high parts of the hills"! With this is to be compared the accounts of the horrible end of persecutors like King Herod, whose voice had been likened to that of a God by the people of Tyre and Sidon, who had heard his oration,

With it also is to be compared the story of the Martyrs of Scili (181 A.D.). The leader of the little band was Speratus. When the Proconsul asked him, "What are the things in your box?" he replied, "Books and Epistles of Paul, a just man". The use of the plural for the pronoun "your" shows that these books were not his own private property, but belonged to the community[3]. This, together with the fact

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1. Oxyr. Papyr. 1242, G and H, Vol. X, p. 112f.
2. Acts 12:20-25.
3. Harnack, Bible Reading in the Early Church, p. 42.

that in times of persecution copies of the Bible were sought for at first in the churches and demanded from the clergy, shows not only that the Scriptures had been a product of, and entered into, the growing organization of the Christian church, but also the recognition on the part of its enemies of their importance in its life.

The Old Testament, which had traveled westward into the partial religious vacuum of the Graeco-Roman world, and the new Sacred Writings produced by the followers of Jesus, had reached and maintained their supremacy by virtue of their perennial capacity to meet the spiritual needs created by the religious urge of the western Mediterranean world and the exigencies connected with the organization and propagation of the new religion among peoples who were accustomed to seek religious authority in the sacred writings of the past. It had become a vital part of the religion of Jesus. That was the meaning of Diocletian's order to burn the Scriptures in the market places[1].

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1. Euseb. H. E. VIII, 2.

The Function of Sacred Books in Early Christianity and the Graeco-Roman Religions

Abstract of a Dissertation
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In Candidacy for the Degree of
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Department of New Testament in
The Graduate Divinity School

By
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Contemporary emphasis upon Christianity as a movement of life demands a history of the canon of the New Testament in terms of the function of sacred books in the lives of men struggling for a satisfying life, on the theory that the sanction necessary to make a book sacred is its capacity to meet human religious needs.

The Old Testament had resulted from the use of its component parts as sentences of doom and prophecies of hope, first national and later individual, giving compensation for political defeat; as law-books guiding the political and religious policies of an unrealized, yet always ideally theocratic government; and consequently as books of public instruction in the duties of the individual.

Since special theories of history exaggerate the differences between Rabbinical Judaism and Hellenism, an examination of the Mishnaic and Talmudic conception of sacred books is prerequisite to a clear conception of the genetic influence of Graeco-Roman attitudes. To Sira

sacred writings were a source of wisdom; in First Enoch sacred history is written in the future tense, thus becoming through the momentum of its "fulfillment" a source of courage and hope; in Jubilees it is the realization in time of what was eternally written, the glory of Israel in the face of Hellenism; in Second Baruch sacred books embody the instrument of salvation. Fourth Ezra, however, despairing of man's ability to keep the Law, commended Apocalyptic. In Rabbinical circles he was not successful.

Rabbinical Judaism, insisting above all else on doing God's will, found that will wholly revealed for all time in the written Torah. This, however, was static, and since dynamic life was constantly producing new practices and beliefs, exegetical rules were developed to derive the new oral law from the existing written code. The results in turn were the Mishna, Gemara and Talmud. Examination of this literature shows that the study of the Torah was believed to protect from suffering. Sacred history, read in the light of discipline, was carefully taught to each new generation. The Law was read in the home, in the Synagogue, and at national festivals, and prophecy in decline was compensated by the Rabbis, who labored to make Israel worthy of it once more by faithful study and obedience. Their fond hope for the future Age was a place in the Heavenly Academy. Past, present, and future were bound up in the Eternal Torah. This gave the Jew his apologetic and enabled him to rise superior to social inferiority.

Hellenistic Jews derived the same values from Scripture, but felt more keenly the necessity for external propaganda. They had to maintain the national spirit and at the same time come to terms with Greek thought.

In particular, there were the problems of undeserved suffering, of the universe, and of self-control in the fusion between conflicting philosophical and ethical systems and national competition for the prestige of antiquity. In each case Scripture functioned, and analogously to Rabbinical exegesis and its further authoritative products, Greek allegory produced new sacred writings.

The first Christians were schooled in Jewish attitudes towards and use of the Old Testament; but Scripture came to them both mediately and immediately--mediately by being transformed through the personality and the precedent set by Jesus in its use as a source of inspiration and of authentication. Then each generation of his followers, receiving it immediately, turned it against the orthodox Jews to authorize their innovations in Jewish practice, and used it to support their struggles for a place in the Gentile religious world.

Scripture served to confirm them in their real, but subjective and discontinuous resurrection experiences. Its eschatology gave hope of an early return of the glorified Lord Jesus; its prophecies vindicated the phenomena of the Spirit; and it operated in the transition from the ecstatic-revelatory to the didactic-interpretive type of Christianity. It functioned in the development of the doctrine of the Church; its language became the language of worship; it emphasized the necessity and significance of Baptism, and gave a realization of the sacramental union in the Lord's Supper; its precepts guided the administrative and practical activities of the Christians; and finally in the missionary enterprise, and in coping with "heresies", it was employed to emphasize the danger of apostasy and the corresponding reward for steadfastness,

and when it was found agreeable as well as necessary to be inclusive of Hellenistic thought, it served to justify this procedure both to those of Jewish ancestry or sympathies and to non-Jews who had not found in their own religions a completely satisfying life. From time to time in the course of this development the Old Scriptures were found inadequate, and new books were written, which, when capable of functioning for a longer or shorter period of time in sufficiently varied localities and circumstances, were in turn venerated as sacred and canonized.

Necessarily the Graeco-Roman element was a vital factor in the process. Its significance can best be set forth by asking, What is the explanation of the extraordinary acceptance of the Jewish Scriptures in the Gentile world? and, How did they, once accepted, maintain their position and why was a New Testament produced and formed in addition? To take these facts for granted and as not calling in themselves for explanation is to miss the key not only to many subsidiary difficulties, but also to the main problem of the Canon itself.

The first step in the solution is to consider the Sibylline Books. Having functioned continuously throughtout the long history of the Roman people, they had accustomed men to look for help, both in public and in private crises, to inspired writings, and the consequent progressive movement of the authority of the Sibyl from East to West had been the means of cutting the channel through which Eastern religions, particularly the Jewish, had flowed Rome-ward, bearing their sacred books. This accounts for the acceptance of the Septuagint. Then when it could no longer meet the requirements, the same attitudes on the part of the Gentiles necessitated the production of new sacred books. The producing

agent was the individual acting under the stimulus of the group, and the selective process which resulted in a New Testament Canon was guided by the developing organization of the Church. The Roman method of guaranteeing sacred writings by official sanction, as from time to time attempted in the case of the Sibylline oracles, was one of the influences operative.

The use of books of magic and Hades-books also affected the function of sacred books in Christianity, and philosophical eclecticism, accompanied by the attempt to construct a philosophical religion, led men to seek inspired authentication for their systems. Christianity took over such men and furnished them with inspired writings capable of giving them the assurance they demanded.

From the standpoint of ecclesiastical control over sacred books, a study of the function of sacred writings in the organized religious activities of the Greeks and Romans is indispensable. In the form of "the law" they were used in the founding of private religious associations; "history," poetry, and mythology were read in connection with the sacrifices and games; in the mystery religions, about whose Gods had gathered a venerable literature, they were chanted in liturgy and read to initiates by way of propaganda and catechization. In Homer and other poets ancient theories of character-building found an authoritative literature. All this at once demanded and made possible the more extended use of sacred books by the Christians. Moreover, the decrees, the odes, the paeans of praise, the commemorative inscriptions, and the writings of the Emperors themselves, which were at the disposal of the Imperial cult, demanded confrontation with psalms and spiritual songs, and with gospel, epistle, and apocalypse. The Christian books, with their story of the Cross and of the martyrs who had held true, functioned to show the ultimate futility of any attack upon the Lord Jesus and his followers.

(1312 words)